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THE

MINOR THEATRE:

Being a Collection of the most approved

Farces, Operas, and Comedies,

IN

ONE, TWO, AND THREE ACTS.

WITH SOME

ACCOUNT OF THE RESPECTIVE AUTHORS.

VOLUME THE SECOND

CONTAINS

THE KNIGHTS,
THE DESERT ISLAND,
MISS IN HER TEENS,
FLORA; or, HOB IN THE WELL,
AND
THE DEUCE IS IN HIM.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,

FOR J. PARSONS, No 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1794.

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Engraved by W. Ridley, from a Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

DAVID GARRICK Esq.r

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Printed for J. Parsons, 21, Paternoster Row. Dec.r 1793.

THE KNIGHTS.

A FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

WRITTEN BY SAMUEL FOOTE, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

The Lines distinguished by Inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,

FOR J. PARSONS, N° 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1793.

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The Knights.

ALTHOUGH this diverting farce has not been performed for a number of years; yet, coming from the pen of so celebrated a writer as the late Samuel Foote, we presume the patrons of this collection will honour it with a welcome, and perhaps join with us in the hope of its revival on the stage.

The character of TIM *is well suited to the talents of that admirable comedian the Younger Bannister: as for the Elder, it was well known that when Foote expired, he left but one behind him, and that one Charles Bannister; who could personify, with any degree of success, those characters, which owed their existence to the creative; and their effect to the acting powers of their inimitable author.*

The KNIGHTS *made their first public appearance, so long back as the year* 1747, *at the Haymarket Little Theatre.—— Their reception was a cordial one, and such as their originality, and strength of character, in perfect harmony with nature, so well intitled them to expect from a British audience.*

It has been said, that Mr. Murphy had an eye upon the newshunter of Mr. Foote, in his Knights, when he drew his own in the Upholsterer; however that may be, it is very evident that the difference between the two politicians *is very material.*

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Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

		Men.
Hartop,	-	Mr. Foote
Sir Gregory Gazette,	-	Mr. Yates
Jenkins,	-	Mr. Blakes
Tim,	-	Mr. Costollo
Robin,	-	Mr. Clough.
		Women.
Jenny,	-	Miss Minors
Miss Penelope Trifle,	-	Mrs. Cross
Miss Sukey Trifle,	..	Miss Mills.

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PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY MR. FOOTE.

HAPPY my muse, had she first turn'd her art,
From honour's dangerous path, to touch the heart.
They who, in all the bluster of blank verse,
The mournful tales of love and war rehearse,
Are sure the critics censure to escape;
You hiss not heroes now, you only—gape:
Nor (strangers quite to heroes, kings, and queens,)
Dare you intrude your judgment on their scenes.
A different lot the comic muse attends,
She is oblig'd to treat you with your friends:
Must search the court, the forum, and the city,
Mark out the dull, the gallant, and the witty;
Youth's wild profusion, th' avarice of age;
Nay, bring the Pit itself, upon the stage.
First to the bar she turns her various face:
Hem, hem! My lord, I'm counsel in this case;
And if so be your lordship should think fit,
Why to be sure, my client must submit:
For why, because———Then off she trips again,
And to the sons of commerce shifts her scene:
There, whilst the griping sire, with moping care,
Defrauds the world himself, t'enrich his heir;
The pious boy, his father's toil rewarding,
For thousand throws a main at Covent-Garden.

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These are the portraits we're oblig'd to show:
You are all judges if they're like or no:
Here should we fail, some other shape we'll try,
And grace our future scenes with novelty.
I have a plan to treat you with Burletta,
That cannot miss your taste, Mia spiletta.
But should the following piece your mirth excite,
From Nature's volume we'll persist to write.
Your partial favour bade us first proceed;
Then spare th' offender, since you urg'd the deed.

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THE KNIGHTS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room.*

HARTOP *and* JENKINS *discovered.*

Jenkins.

I SHOULD not choose to marry into such a family.

Har. Choice, dear Dick, is very little concern'd in the matter; and to convince you that love is not the minister of my counsels, know, that I never saw but once the object of my present purpose; and that too at a time, and in a circumstance, not very likely to stamp a favourable impression. What think you of a raw boarding-school girl at Lincoln Minster, with a mind unpolish'd, a figure uninform'd, and a set of features tainted with the colours of her unwholesome food.

Jenk. No very engaging object indeed, Hartop.

Har. Your thoughts now were mine then; but some connections I have since had with her father,

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have given birth to my present design upon her. You are no stranger to the situation of my circumstances: my neighbourhood to Sir Penurious Trifle, was a sufficient motive for his advancing what money I wanted by way of mortgage; the hard terms he imposed upon me, and the little regard I have paid to œconomy, has made it necessary for me to attempt, by some scheme, the re-establishment of my fortune. This young lady's simplicity, not to call it ignorance, presented her at once as a proper subject for my purpose.

Jenk. Success to you, Jack, with all my soul! a fellow of your spirit and vivacity, mankind ought to support for the sake of themselves. 'For whatever Seneca and the other moral writers may have 'suggested in contempt of riches, it is plain their 'maxims were not calculated for the world as it 'now stands. In days of yore, indeed, when virtue was called *wisdom*, and vice *folly*, such princi'ples might have been encourag'd: but as the pre'sent subjects of our enquiry are, not what a man 'is, but what he has; as to be rich, is to be wise 'and virtuous; and to be poor, ignorant and vici'ous; I heartily applaud your plan.

'*Har.* Your observation is but too just. And is 'it not, Dick, a little unaccountable, that we, who 'condescend so servilely to copy the follies and fop'peries of our polite neighbours, should be so to'tally averse to an imitation of their virtues? In 'France, has he wealth? is an interrogation never 'put, till they are disappointed in their enquiries

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'after the birth and wisdom of a fashionable fellow: but here, how much a-year?—two thousand '—The devil! In what county? Berkshire. Indeed! God bless us! a happy dog!——How the 'deuce came I to be interested in a man's fortune, 'unless I am his steward or his taylor? Indeed, 'knowledge and genius are worth examining into; 'by those my understanding may be improv'd, or 'my imagination gratify'd: but why such a man 'being able to eat ortolans, and drink French wine, 'is to recommend him to my esteem, is what I 'can't readily conceive.'

Jenk. 'This complaint may with justice be made 'of all imitations: the ridiculous side is ever the 'object imitated.' But, 'a truce to moralizing, and 'to our business.' Prithee, in the first place, how can you gain admittance to your mistress? and, in the second, is the girl independent of her father? His consent, I suppose, you have no thought of obtaining.

Har. Some farther proposals concerning my estate; such as an increase of the mortgage, or an absolute sale, is a sufficient pretence for a vist; and as to the cash, twenty to my knowledge; independent too, you rogue! and, besides, an only child, you know: and then, when things are done, they can't be undone—and 'tis well, 'tis no worse—and a hundred such pretty proverbs, will, 'tis great odds, reconcile the old fellow at last. Besides, my papa *in posse*, has a foible, which, if I condescend to humour, I have his soul, my dear.

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Jenk. Prithee, now you are in spirits, give me a portrait of Sir Penurious; though he is my neighbour, yet he is so domestic an animal, that I know no more of him than the common country-conversation, that he is a thrifty, wary man.

Har. The very abstract of penury! Sir John Cutler, with his transmigrated stockings, was but a type of him. For instance, the barber has the growth of his and his daughter's head once a-year, for shaving the knight once a fortnight; his shoes are made with the leather of a coach of his grandfather's, built in the year One; his male-servant is footman, groom, carter, coachman, and taylor; his maid employs her leisure hours in plain work for the neighbours, which Sir Penurious takes care, as her labour is for his emolument, shall be as many as possible, by joining with his daughter in scouring the rooms, making the beds, &c.—Thus much for his moral character. Then as to his intellectual, he is a mere *charte blanche*; the last man he is with must afford him matter for the next he goes to: but a story is his idol; throw him in that, and he swallows it; no matter what, raw or roasted, savoury or insipid, down it goes, and up again to the first person he meets. It is upon this basis I found my favour with the knight, having acquir'd patience enough to hear his stories, and equipp'd myself with a quantity sufficient to furnish him. 'His manner is indeed peculiar, 'and for once or twice entertaining enough. I'll 'give you a specimen—' Is not that an equipage?

Jenk. Hey! yes faith; and the owner an acquaint-

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ance of mine: Sir Gregory Gazette, by Jupiter! and his son Tim with him. Now I can match your Knight. He must come this way to the parlour. We'll have a scene; but take your cue; he is a country politician.

Sir GREGORY *entering and* WAITER.

Sir Greg. What, neither the Gloucester Journal, nor the Worcester Courant, nor the Northampton Mercury, nor the Chester? Mr. Jenkins, I am your humble servant: A strange town this, Mr. Jenkins, no news stirring, no papers taken in! Is that gentleman a stranger, Mr. Jenkins? Pray, Sir, not to be too bold, you don't come from London?

Har. But last night.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, that's wonderful! Mr. Jenkins, introduce me.

Jenk. Mr. Hartop, Sir Gregory Gazette.

Sir Greg. Sir, I am proud to—Well, Sir, and what news? You come from—— Pray, Sir, are you a parliament-man?

Har. Not I, indeed, Sir.

Sir Greg. Good lack! may be, belong to the law?

Har. Nor that.

Sir Greg. Oh, then in some of the offices; the treasury, or the exchequer?

Har. Neither, Sir.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, that's wonderful! Well, but Mr.——Pray what name did Mr Jenkins, Ha, —ha—

Har. Hartop.

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Sir Greg. Ay, true!—What, not of the Hartops of Boston?

Har. No.

Sir Greg. May be not. There is, Mr. Hartop, one thing that I envy you Londoners in much—quires of newspapers! Now I reckon you read a matter of eight sheets every day.

Har. Not one.

Sir Greg. Wonderful!—Then, may be, you are about court; and so being at the fountain-head, know what is in the papers before they are printed.

Har. I never trouble my head about them.—An old fool! [*Apart.*

Sir Greg. Good Lord! Your friend, Mr. Jenkins, is very close.

Jenk. Why, Sir Gregory, Mr. Hartop is much in the secrets above; and it becomes a man so trusted to be wary, you know.

Sir Greg. May be so, may be so. Wonderful! Ay, ay, a great man, no doubt.

Jenk. But I'll give him a better insight into your character, and that will induce him to throw off his reserve.

Sir Greg. May be so: do, do; ay, ay.

Jenk. Prithee, Jack, don't be so crusty: indulge the knight's humour a little! besides, if I guess right, it may be necessary for the conduct of your design to contract a pretty strict intimacy there.

Har. Well, do as you will.

Jenk. Sir Gregory, Mr. Hartop's ignorance of your character made him a little shy in his replies:

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but you will now find him more communicative; and, in your ear—he is a treasure; he is in all the mysteries of government! at the bottom of every thing.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! a treasure! ay, may be so.

Jenk. And, that you may have him to yourself, I'll go in search of your son.

Sir Greg. Do so, do so; Tim is without; just come from his uncle Tregegle's, at Menegizy, in Cornwall. Tim is an honest lad—do so, do so—(*Exit Jenk.*)—Well, Mr. Hartop, and so we have a peace, lack-a-day; long-look'd-for come at last. But pray, Mr. Hartop, how many newspapers may you have printed in a week?

Har. About an hundred and fifty, Sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! and all full, I reckon; full as an egg; nothing but news! Well, well, I shall go to London one of these days. A hundred and fifty! Wonderful! And pray, now, which do you reckon the best?

Har. Oh, Sir Gregory, they are various in their excellencies as their uses. If you are inclin'd to blacken, by a couple of lines, the reputation of a neighbour, 'whose character neither your nor his 'whole life can possibly restore,' you may do it for two shillings in one paper: if you are displaced or disappointed of a place, a triplet against the ministry will be always well received at the head of another; 'and then, as a paper of morning-amusement, you 'have the Fool.

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'*Sir Greg.* The Fool! good lack! and pray who 'and what may that same fool be?

'*Har.* Why, Sir Gregory, the author has artfully 'assumed that habit, like the royal jesters of old, to 'level his satire with more security to himself, and 'severity to others.

Sir Greg. May be so, may be so! 'The Fool! 'ha, ha, ha! Well enough; a queer dog, and no 'fool, I warrant you. Killigrew; ah, I have heard 'my grandfather talk much of that same Killigrew, 'and no fool.' But what's all this to news, Mr. Hartop? Who gives us the best account of the king of Spain, and the queen of Hungary, and those great folks? Come now, you could give us a little news if you would; come now—snug!—nobody by. Good now, do; come, ever so little.

Har. Why, as you so largely contribute to the support of the government, it is but fair you should know what they are about. We are at present in a treaty with the Pope.

Sir Greg. With the Pope! Wonderful! Good now, good now! How, how?

Har. We are to yield him up a large track of the Terra-incognita, together with both the Needles, Scilly-rocks, and the Lizard-point, on condition that the Pretender has the government of Laputa, and the bishop of Greenland succeeds to St. Peter's chair: he being, you know, a Protestant, when possessed of the pontificals, issues out a bull, commanding all Catholics to be of his religion: they deeming the

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Pope infallible, follow his directions; and then, Sir Gregory, we are all of one mind.

Sir Greg. Good lack, good lack! Rare news, rare news, rare news! Ten millions of thanks, Mr. Hartop. But might not I just hint this to Mr. Soakum, our vicar? 'twould rejoice his heart.

Har. O fie, by no means.

Sir Greg. Only a line—a little hint—Do now?

Har. Well, Sir, it is difficult for me to refuse you any thing.

Sir Greg. Ten thousand thanks. Good now! the Pope—Wonderful! I'll minute it down—Both the Needles?

Har. Ay, both.

Sir Greg. Good now; I'll minute it—the Lizard-point—both the Needles—Scilly-rocks—bishop of Greenland—St. Peter's chair—Why then, when this is finished, we may chance to attack the great Turk, and have holy wars again, Mr. Hartop.

Har. That's part of the scheme.

Sir Greg. Ah, good now! You see I have a head! Politics have been my study many a day. Ah, if I had been in London to improve by the newspapers! They tell me Dr. Drybones is to succeed to the bishopric of Wisper.

Har. No; Doctor——

Sir Greg. Indeed! I was told by my landlord at Ross, that it was between him and the dean of——

Har. To my knowledge.

Sir Greg. Nay, you know best, to be sure. If it should——Hush! here's Mr. Jenkins and son Tim—

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mum!—Mr. Jenkins does not know any thing about the treaty with the Pope?

Har. Not a word.

Sir Greg. Mum!

Enter TIM *and Mr.* JENKINS.

Jenk. Master Timothy is almost grown out of knowledge, Sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! ay, ay; Ill weeds grow a-pace. Son Tim, Mr. Hartop; a great man, child! Mr. Hartop, son Tim.

Har. Sir, I shall be always glad to know every branch that springs from so valuable a trunk as Sir Gregory Gazette.

Sir Greg. May be so. Wonderful! ay, ay.

Har. Sir, I am glad to see you in Herefordshire;—Have you been long from Cornwall?

Tim. Ay, Sir; a matter of four weeks or a month, more or less.

Sir Greg. Well said, Tim. Ay, ay, ask Tim any questions, he can answer for himself. Tim, tell Mr. Hartop all the news about the elections, and the tinners, and the tides, and the roads, and the pilchards. I want a few words with my Master Jenkins.

Har. You have been so long absent from your native country, that you have almost forgot it.

Tim. Yes sure. I ha' been at uncle Tregegle's a matter of twelve or a dozen year, more or less.

Har. Then I reckon you were quite impatient to see your papa and mama?

Tim. No sure, not I. Father sent for me to uncle.

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—Sure Menegezy is a choice place! and I could a' stay'd there all my born days, more or less.

Har. Pray, Sir, what were your amusements?

Tim. Nan! what d'ye say?

Har. How did you divert yourself?

Tim. Oh, we ha' pastimes enow there:—we ha' bull-baiting, and cock-fighting, and fishing, and hunting, and hurling, and wrestling.

Har. The two last are sports for which that country is very remarkable;—in those, I presume, you are very expert.

Tim. Nan! What?

Har. I say you are a good wrestler.

Tim. Oh, yes sure, I can wrestle well enow:—but we don't wrestle after your fashion; we ha' no tripping, fath and sole! we go all upon close hugs, or the flying mare. Will you try a fall, Master?—I won't hurt you, fath and sole.

Har. We had as good not venture though. But have you left in Cornwall nothing that you regret the loss of more than hurling and wrestling?

Tim. Nan! What?

Har. No favourite she?

Tim. Arra, I coupled Favourite and Jowler together, and sure they tugg'd it all the way up. Part with Favourite! no, I thank you for nothing. You must know I nurs'd Favourite myself: uncle's huntsman was going to Mill-pond to drown all Music's puppies, so I saved she. But fath, I'll tell you a comical story; at Lanston, they both broke loose, and eat a whole loin-a'-veal, and a leg of beef:

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'Crist!' how landlord swear'd! fath the poor fellow was almost maz'd; it made me die wi' laughing. But how came you to know about our Favourite?

Har. A circumstance so material to his son, could not escape the knowledge of Sir Gregory Gazette's friends. But here you mistook me a little 'Squire Tim; I meant whether your affections were not settled upon some pretty girl—Has not some Cornish lass caught your heart?

Tim. Hush! cod, the old man will hear; jog a tiny bit this way—won't a' tell father?

Har. Upon my honour!

Tim. Why then, I'll tell you the whole story more or less. Do you know Mally Pengrouse?

Har. I am not so happy.

Tim. She's uncle's milk-maid;—she's as handsome, Lord! her face all red and white, like the inside of a shoulder of mutton; so I made love to our Mally: and just, fath, as I had got her good-will to run away to Exeter and be married, uncle found it out, and sent word to father, and father sent for me home;—but I don't love her a bit the worse for that. But, i'cod, if you tell father, he'll knock my brains out; for he says, I'll disparage the family, and mother's as mad as a March hare about it;—so father and mother ha' brought me to be married to some young body in these parts.

Har. What, is my lady here?

Tim. No, sure; dame Winnifred, as father calls her, could not come along.

Har. I am sorry for that; I have the honour to be a distant relation of her ladyship's.

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Tim. Like enough, fath!——she's a-kin to half the world I think. But don't you say a word to father about Mally Pengrouse. Hush!

Jenk. Mr. Hartop, Sir Gregory will be amongst us some time—he is going with his son to Sir Penurious Trifle's;——there is a kind of a treaty of marriage on foot between Miss Sukey Trifle and Mr. Timothy.

Har. The devil! *(apart.)* I shall be glad of every circumstance that can make me better acquainted with Sir Gregory.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now; may be so, may be so!

Tim. Father, sure the gentleman says as how mother and he are a-kin.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! Lack-a-day, lack-a-day! how, how? I am proud to—but how, Mr. Hartop, how?

Har. Why, Sir, a cousin-german of my aunt's first husband, intermarry'd with a distant relation of a collateral branch by the mother's side, the Apprices of Lantrindon; and we have ever since quartered in a 'scutcheon of pretence the three goat's tails rampant, divided by a cheveron, field-argent; with a leek pendant in the dexter-point, to distinguish the second house,

Sir Greg. Wonderful! wonderful! nearly, nearly related! Good now, good now, if dame Winnifred was here, she'd make 'em all out with a wet finger;——but they are above me. Prithee, Tim, good now, see after the horses—and, d'ye hear, try if you can get any newspapers.

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Tim. Yes, father——But cousin what-d'ye-call-um, not a word about Mally Pengrouse.

Har. Mum! [*Exit Tim.*

Sir Greg. Good now, that boy will make some mistake about the horses now! I'll go myself. Good now, no farther, cousin; if you please, no ceremony—A hundred and fifty newspapers a week! 'the Fool!' ha, ha, ha, wonderful! an odd dog. [*Exit Sir Greg.*

Jenk. So, Jack, here's a fresh spoke in your wheel.

Har. This is a cursed cross incident.

Jenk. Well, but something must be done to frustrate the scheme of your new cousin's. Can you think of nothing?

Har. I have been hammering: pray, are the two knights intimate? are they well acquainted with each other's person?

Jenk. Faith, I can't tell; but we may soon know.

Har. Cou'd you recommend me a good spirited girl, who has humour and compliance to follow a few directions, and understanding enough to barter a little inclination for 3000l. a-year and a fool?

Jenk. In part I guess your design; the man's daughter of the house is a good lively lass, has a fortune to make, and no reputation to lose: I'll call her—Jenny!—but the enemy's at hand——I'll withdraw and prepare Jenny. When the worshipful family are retired, I'll introduce the wench. [*Exit Jenk.*

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Enter Sir GREGORY *and* TIM.

Sir Greg. Pray, now, cousin, are you in friendship with Sir Penurious Trifle?

Har. I have the honour, Sir, of that gentleman's acquaintance.

Sir Greg. May be so, may be so!—but, lack-a-day, cousin, is he such a miser as folks say? Good now, they tell me we shall hardly have necessaries for ourselves and horses at Gripe-hall;——but as you are a relation, you should, good now, know the affairs of the family. Here's Sir Penurious's letter; here, cousin.

Har. "Your overture I receive with pleasure, "and should be glad to meet you in Shropshire."—I fancy, from a thorough knowledge of Sir Penurious's disposition, and by what I can collect from the contents of that letter, he would be much better pleased to meet you here than at his own house.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, may be so!—a strange man! wonderful! But, good now, cousin, what must we do?

Har. I this morning paid Sir Penurious a visit; and if you'll honour me with your commands, I'll——

Sir Greg. Wonderful! to-day!——good now, that's lucky! cousin, you are very kind. Good now, I'll send a letter, Tim, by cousin Hartop.

Har. A letter from so old an acquaintance, and upon so happy an occasion, will secure me a favourable reception.

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Sir Greg. Good lack, good lack, an old acquaintance, indeed, cousin Hartop! we were at Hereford 'size together—let's see, wonderful, how long ago? —'twas while I was courting Dame Winny, the year before I married—Good now, how long? let's see—that year the hackney stable was built, and Peter Ugly, the blind pad, fell into a saw-pit.

Tim. Mother says, father and she was marry'd the first of April in the year ten; and I knows 'tis thereabout, for I am two and thirty; and brother Jeremy, and Roger, and Gregory, and sister Nelly, were born'd before I.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! how time wears away! wonderful! thirty-eight years ago, Tim! I could not have thought it. But come in, let's set about the letter. 'But, pray, cousin, what diver-'sions, good now, are going forward in London?

'*Har.* Oh, Sir, we are in no distress for amuse-'ment; we have plays, balls, puppet-shews, mas-'querades, bull-baitings, boxings, burlettas, routs, 'drums, and a thousand others. But I am in haste 'for your epistle, Sir Gregory.'

Sir Greg. Cousin, your servant.

[*Exit Sir Gregory and Tim.*

Har. I am your most obedient—Thus far our scheme succeeds; and if Jenkins's girl can assume the aukward pertness of the daughter, with as much success as I can imitate the spirited folly of Sir Penurious the father, I don't despair of a happy catastrophe.

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'*Enter* JENNY.

'*Jenny.* Sir, Mr. Jenkins——

'*Har.* Oh, child, your instructions shall be administered within.

'*Jenny.* Mr. Jenkins has open'd your design, and I am ready and able to execute my part.

'*Har.* My dear, I have not the least doubt of either your inclination or ability——But, pox take this old fellow! what in the devil's name can bring him back? Scour, Jenny.

Enter Sir GREGORY.

'*Sir Greg.* Cousin, I beg pardon; but I have a favour to beg—Good now, could not you make interest at some coffee-house in London, to buy, for a small matter, the old books of newspapers, and send them into the country to me? They would pass away the time rarely in a rainy day—

'*Har.* Sir, I'll send you a cart-load.

'*Sir Greg.* Good now, good now! Ten thousand thanks!—You are a cousin indeed. But, pray, cousin, let us, good now, see some of the works of that same fool?

'*Har.* I'll send them you all; but a——

'*Sir Greg.* What, all?——Lack-a-day, that's kind, cousin!—The Terra-incognita—both the Needles——a great deal of that!——But what bishop is to be Pope?

'*Har.* Zounds, Sir, I am in haste for your letter—When I return, ask as many questions——

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'*Sir Greg.* Good now, good now! that's true—
'I'll in, and about it.——But, cousin, the Pope is
'not to have Gibraltar?

'*Har.* No, no; damn it, no! As none but the
'Fool could say it, so none but ideots would believe
'him.——Pray, Sir Gregory——

'*Sir Greg.* Well, well, cousin, lack-a-day! you
'are so—but pray——

'*Har.* Damn your praying! If you don't finish
'your letter immediately, you may carry it your-
'self.

'*Sir Greg.* Well, well, cousin! Lack-a-day, you
'are in such a—good now, I go, I go.

'*Har.* But if the truth should be discover'd, I
'shall be inevitably disappointed.

'*Sir Greg.* But, cousin, are Scilly rocks——

'*Har.* I wish they were in your guts with all my
'heart. I must quit the field, I find. [*Exit.*

'*Sir Greg.* Wonderful! good now, good now!
'a passionate man! Lack-a-day, I am glad the Pope
'is not to have Gibraltar though.' [*Exit.*

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Sir* GREGORY, *and* TIM *reading news to him, discovered.*

Tim.

CONSTANTINOPLE, N. S. Nov. 15, the grand Seignior——

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! good now, Tim, the politics, child: and read the stars, and the dashes, and the blanks, as I taught you, Tim.

Tim. Yes, father—We can assure our readers, that the D— dash is to go to F blank: and that a certain noble L— is to resign his p—e in the t——y, in order to make room for the two three stars.

Sir Greg. Wonderful: good now, good now! great news, Tim! Ah, I knew the two three stars would come in play one time or other. This London Evening knows more than any of them. Well, child, well.

Tim. From the D. J.

Sir Greg. Ay, that's the Dublin Journal. Go on, Tim.

Tim. Last Saturday, a gang of highwaymen broke into an empty house on Ormond quay, and stripp'd it of all the furniture.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, wonderful! To what a height these rogues are grown!

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Tim. The way to Mr. Keith's chapel, is turn of your——

Sir Greg. Psha! skip that, Tim; I know that road as well as the doctor: 'tis in every time.

Tim. J. Ward, at the Cat and Gridiron, Petticoat-lane, makes tabby all over for people inclined to be crooked; and if he was to have the universal world for making a pair of stays, he could not put better stuff in them——

Sir Greg. Good now; where's that, Tim?

Tim. At the Cat and Gridiron, father.

Sir Greg. I'll minute that: All my lady Isard's children, good now, are inclined to be crooked.

Enter a DRAWER.

Draw. Sir, Mr. Jenkins begs to speak with you.

Sir Greg. Good now; desire him to walk in.

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. I thought it might not be improper to prepare you for a visit from Sir Penurious Trifle. I saw him and his daughter alight at the apothecary's above.

Sir Greg. What, they are come? Wonderful! Very kind, very kind, very kind, indeed, Mr.—— Come, Tim, settle my cravat: good now, let's be a little decent.—Remember your best bow to your mistress, Tim.

Tim. Yes, father! but must not I kiss Miss Suck?

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, ay, ay. Pray, is cousin Hartop come along?

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Jenk. I have not seen him; but I fancy I had better introduce my neighbours.

Sir Greg. Good now, would you be so kind. [*Exit. Jenkins.*) Stand behind me, Tim—Pull down your ruffles, child.

Tim. But, father, won't Miss Suck think me bold if I kiss her chops the first time?

Sir Greg. Lack-a day, no, Tim, no. Faint heart never won fair lady. Ha, Tim, had you but seen me attack dame Winny! But times ar'n't as they were. Good now, we were another kind of folks in those days; stout hearty smacks, that wou'd ha' made your mouth water again; and the mark stood upon the pouting lip like the print upon a pound of butter. But the master-misses of the present age go, lack-a-day, as gingerly about it, as if they were afraid to fill their mouths with the paint upon their mistresses cheeks. Ah, the days I have seen!

Tim. Nay, father, I warrant, if that's all, I kiss her hearty enow, fath and sole!

Sir Greg. Hush, Tim, hush! Stand behind me, child.

Enter HARTOP *as Sir* PENURIOUS TRIFLE, *and* JENNY *as Miss* SUKEY, *and* JENKINS.

Sir Greg. Sir Penurious, I am overjoy'd!—Good now!

Har. Sir Gregory, I kiss your hand. My daughter Suck.

Sir Greg. Wonderful!—Miss, I am proud to—Son Tim—Sir Penurious—Best bow, child—Miss Suck—

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Tim. An't that right father? [*Kisses her.*

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! I am glad to see you look so well. You keep your own, Sir Penurious.

Har. Ay, ay, stout enough, Sir Gregory; stout enough, brother knight; hearty as an oak. Hey, Dick? Gad, now I talk of an oak, I'll tell you a story of an oak. It will make you die with laughing. Hey, you Dick, you have heard it; shall I tell it Sir Gregory?

Jenk. Though I have heard it so often, yet there is something so engaging in your manner of telling a story, that it always appears new.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now; I love a comical story. Pray, Sir Penurious, let's have it.—Mind, Tim; mind, child.

Tim. Yes, father; fath and sole, I love a choice story to my heart's blood!

Har. You, knight, I was at Bath last summer—a water that people drink when they are ill. You have heard of the bath, Dick! Hey, you!

Tim. Yes, fath, I know Bath; I was there in my way up.

Sir Greg. Hush, Tim; good now, hush!

Har. There's a coffee-house, you—a place where people drink coffee and tea, and read the news.

Sir Greg. Pray, Sir Penurious, how many papers may they take in?

Har. Psha! damn the news? mind the story.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! a hasty man, Tim!

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Har. Pox take you both! I have lost the story—Where did I leave off?—hey—you Dick.

Tim. About coffee and tea.

Har. Right, you, right! true, true! So ecod, you knight, I us'd to breakfast at this coffee-house every morning; it cost me eightpence though, and I had always a breakfast at home—no matter for that though! there I breakfasted, you Dick, ecod, at the same table with lord Tom Truewit—You have heard of Truewit, you knight; a droll dog! You, Dick, he told us the story, and made us die with laughing. You have heard of Charles the Second, you knight; he was son of Charles the First, king here in England, that was beheaded by Oliver Cromwell: So what does Charles the Second, you knight, do? but he fights Noll at Worcester, a town you have heard of, not far off: but all would not do, you: ecod, Noll made him scamper, made him run, take to his heels, you knight. Truewit told us the story, made us die with laughing. I always breakfasted at the coffee-house; it cost me eightpence, though I had a breakfast at home—So what does Charles do, but hid himself in an oak, an oak-tree, you, in a wood call'd Boscobel, from two Italian words, Bosco Bello, a fine wood, you; and off he marches: but old Noll would not let him come home; no, says he, you don't come here. Lord Tom told us the story;—made us die with laughing; it cost me eightpence, though I had a breakfast at home. So, you knight, when Noll dy'd, Monk there, you, afterwards Albemarle, in the north, brought him back. So, you,

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the cavaliers, you have heard of them; they were friends to the Stuarts. What did they do, ecod, you Dick! but they put up Charles in a sign, the royal oak; you have seen such signs at country-alehouses: so, ecod, you, what does a Puritan do—the Puritans were friends to Noll—but he puts up the sign of an owl in the ivy-bush, and underneath he writes, "This is not the royal oak." You have seen writings under signs, you knight. Upon this, says the royalists, Ecod, this must not be: so, you, what do they do, but, ecod, they prosecuted the poor Puritan; but they made him change his sign though. And you, Dick, how d'ye think they chang'd it?—Ecod, he puts up the royal oak, and underneath he writes, "This is not the owl in the ivy-bush."—It made us all die with laughing. Lord Tom told the story. I always breakfasted at the coffee-house, though it cost me eightpence, and I had a breakfast at home; hey, you knight! what, Dick, hey!

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! wonderful!

Tim. A choice tale, fath!

Jenk. Oh, Sir Penurious is a most entertaining companion, that must be allow'd.

Sir Greg. Good now, ay, ay, a merry man! But, lack-a-day, would not the young lady choose a little refreshment after her ride? some tea or some——

Har. Hey, you knight! No, no; we intend to dine with thee, man. Well, you, Tim, what dost think of thy father-in-law that is to be, hey? A jolly cock, you Tim; hey, Dick. But prithee, boy what dost do with all this tawdry tinsel on? that hat and

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waistcoat? Trash, knight, trash! more in thy pocket and less in thy cloaths; hey, you Dick! Ecod, you knight, I'll make you laugh: I went to London, you Dick, last year, to call in a mortgage; and what does me I, Dick, but take a trip to a coffee-house in St. Martin's Lane; in comes a French fellow forty times as fine as Tim, with his muff and parlevous, and his Francés; and his head, you knight, as white with powder, ecod, you, as a twelfth cake: and who the devil d'ye think, Dick, this might be, hey, you knight?

Sir Greg. Good now, an ambassador, to be sure.

Har. Ecod, you knight, nor better nor worser than Mynheer Vancaper, a Dutch figure-dancer at the opera-house in the Haymarket.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now!

Har. Psha! pox, prithee, Tim, nobody dresses now; all plain: look at me, knight; I am in the tip of the mode; now am I in full dress; hey Dick?

Jenk. You, Sir, don't want the aid of dress; but in Mr. Gazette, a little regard to that particular is but a necessary compliment to his mistress.

Har. Stuff, Dick, stuff! my daughter, knight, has had otherguess breeding. Hey, you, Suck, come forward. Plain as a pikestaff, knight; all as nature made her; hey, Tim; no flams. Prithee, Tim, off with thy lace, and burn it; 'twill help to buy the licence; 'she'll not like thee a bit the better for 'that;' hey, Suck! But you, knight; ecod, Dick, a toast and tankard would not be amiss after our walk; hey, you!

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Sir Greg. Good now, good now! what you will, Sir Penurious.

Har. Ecod, that's hearty, you! but we won't part the young couple: hey. I'll send Suck some bread and cheese in; hey, knight! at her, Tim.—Come, Dick; come, you knight. Did I ever tell you my courtship, hey, Dick? 'twill make you laugh.

Jenk. Not as I remember.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, let's have it.

Har. You know my wife was blind, you knight.

Sir Greg. Good now, wonderful! not I.

Har. Blind as a beetle when I married her, knight; hey, Dick! she was drown'd in our orchard. Maid Bess, Knight, went to market, you, Dick; and wife rambled into the orchard, and souse dropp'd into the fish-pond. We found her out next day; but she was dead as a herring; no help for that Dick; buried her though, hey you! She was only daughter to Sir Tristram Muckworm, you: rich enough, you, hey! Ecod, you, what does she do, you, but she falls in love with young Sleek her father's chaplain, hey you! Upon that, what does me I, but slips on domine's robes, you, pass'd myself upon her for him, and we were tack'd together, you, knight, hey, ecod; though I believe she never liked me; but what signifies that, hey, Dick; she was rich, you. But come, let's leave the children together.

Sir Greg. Sir, I wait on you.

Har. Nay, pray——

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Sir Greg. Good now, good now, 'tis impossible.

Har. Pox of ceremony! you, Dick, hey! Ecod, knight, I'll tell you a story. One of our ambassadors in France, you, a devilish polite fellow reckon'd, Dick; ecod, you, what does the king of France do, but, says he, I'll try the manners of this fine gentleman: so, knight, going into a coach together, the king would have my lord go first: Oh, an't please your majesty, I can't indeed; you, hey, Dick! Upon which, what does me the king, but he takes his arm thus, you, Dick; am I king of France, or you? is it my coach, or yours? and so pushes him in thus? hey, Dick!

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! he, he, he!

Har. Ecod, Dick, I believe I have made a mistake here; I should have gone in first; hey, Dick! Knight, ecod, you, beg pardon. Yes, your coach, not mine; your house, not mine; hey, knight!

Sir Greg. Wonderful! A merry man, Mr. Jenkins. [*Exeunt the two Knights and Jenk*

Tim. Father and cousin are gone, fath and sole!

Jenny. I fancy my lover is a little puzzled how to begin.

Tim. How—fath and sole, I don't know what to say. How d'ye do, Miss Suck?

Jenny. Pretty well, thank you.

Tim. You have had a choice walk. 'Tis a rare day, fath and sole.

Jenny. Yes, the day's well enough.

Tim. Is your house a good way off here?

Jenny. Dree or your mile.

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Tim. That's a good long walk, fath!

Jenny. I make nothing of it, and back again.

Tim. Like enow. [*Whistles.*

Jenny. [*Sings.*

Tim. You have a rare pipe of your own, Miss.

Jenny. I can sing loud enough, if I have a mind; but father don't love singing.

Tim. Like enow. [*Whistles.*

Jenny. And I an't overfond of whistling.

Tim. Hey! ay, like enow: and I am a bitter bad singer.

Jenny. Hey! ay, like enough.

Tim. Pray, Miss Suck, did ever any body make love to you before?

Jenny. Before when?

Tim. Before now.

Jenny. What if I won't tell you?

Tim. Why then you must let it alone, fath and sole.

Jenny. Like enough.

Tim. Pray, Miss Suck, did your father tell you any thing?

Jenny. About what?

Tim. About *I*.

Jenny. What should a tell?

Tim. Tell! why, as how I and father was come a-wooing.

Jenny. Who?

Tim. Why, you. Could you like me for a sweetheart, Miss Suck?

Jenny. I don't know.

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Tim. Mayhap somebody may ha' got your good-will already?

Jenny. And what then?

Tim. Then! hey, I don't know. But if you could fancy me——

Jenny. For what?

Tim. For your true lover.

Jenny. Well, what then?

Tim. Then! hey! why, fath, we may chance to be married, if the old folks agree together.

Jenny. And suppose I won't be married to you:

Tim. Nay, Miss Suck, I can't help it, fath and sole. But father and mother bid me come a-courting; and if you won't ha' me, I'll tell father so.

Jenny. You are in a woundy hurry, methinks.

Tim. Not I, fath! you may stay as long as——

Enter WAITER.

Wait. There's a woman without wants to speak with Mr. Timothy Gazette.

Tim. That's I. I am glad on't. Well, Miss Suck, your servant. You'll think about it, and let's know your mind when I come back.—Cod, I don't care whether she likes me or no. I don't like her half so well as Mally Pengrouse—Well, your servant, Miss Suck. [*Exit Tim.*

Jenny. Was there ever such an unlick'd cub? I don't think his fortune a sufficient reward for sacrificing my person to such a booby; but as he has money enough, it shall go hard but I please myself: I fear I was a little too backward with my gentleman; but,

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however, a favourable answer to his last question will soon settle matters.

Enter JENKINS.

Jenk. Now, Jenny, what news, child? are things fix'd; are you ready for the nuptial knot?

Jenny. We are in a fair way: 'I thought to 'have quicken'd my swain's advances by a little af-'fected coyness, but the trap would not take:' I expect him back in a minute, and then leave it to my management.

Jenk. Where is he gone?

Jenny. The drawer call'd him to some woman.

Jenk. Woman! he neither knows nor is known by any body here. What can this mean? no counterplot? but, pox, that's impossible! you have not blabb'd, Jenny?

Jenny. My interest would prevent me.

Jenk. Upon that security any woman may, I think, be trusted. I must after him tho'. [*Exit.*

Jenny. I knew the time when Jenkins would not have left me so hastily: 'tis odd that the same 'cause that increases the passion in one sex, should destroy it in the other; the reason is above my 'reach, but the fact I am a severe witness of.' Heigh ho!

Enter HARTOP *as Sir* PENURIOUS, *and Sir* GREGORY GAZETTE.

Har. And so, you knight, says he——you know, knight, what low dogs the ministers were then: how

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does your pot—a pot, you, that they put over the fire to boil broth and meat in—you have seen a pot, you knight—how does your pot boil these troublesome times? hey you! Ecod, my lord, says he, I don't know, I seldom go into my kitchen. A kitchen, you knight, is a place where they dress victuals, roast and boil, and so forth: Ecod, says he, I seldom go into the kitchen—But I suppose, the scum is uppermost still! Hey, you knight! what, ecod, hey! But where's your son, Sir Gregory?

Sir Greg. Good now, good now, where's Tim, Miss Sukey? lack-a-day, what's become of Tim?

Jenny. Gone out a tiny bit, he'll be here presently.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now! Well, and how, Miss Sukey—has Tim? has he! well, and what you have—wonderful?

Enter a SERVANT *with a Letter.*

Serv. Sir, I was commanded to deliver this into your own hands, by Mr. Jenkins.

Har. Hey, you! what a letter? ecod so! Any answer, you? hey!

Serv. None, Sir.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, Sir Penurious is busy! Well, Miss, and did Tim do the thing? did he please you? Come now, tell us the whole story: wonderful! rare news for dame Winny! ha, Tim's father's own son! But come, whisper—ay.

Har. "I have only time to tell you that your "scheme is blasted: this instant I encounter'd Mrs. "Penelope Trifle, with her niece; they will soon

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" be with you."—So then, all's over; but let's see what expedition will do——Well, you knight, hey! what, have they settled? Is the girl willing?

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! right as my leg! ah, Tim, little did I think—But, lack-a-day, I wonder where the boy is! let's seek him.

Har. Agreed, you knight; hey, come.

Enter JENKINS.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, here's Mr. Jenkins. Good now, have you seen Tim?

Jenk. Your curiosity shall be immediately satisfied; but I must first have a word with Sir Penurious.

Har. Well you! what, hey! any news, Dick?

Jenk. Better than you could hope; your rival is disposed of.

Har. Dispos'd of! how?

Jenk. Marry'd by this time, you rogue! The woman that wanted him was no other than Mally Pengrouse, who trudg'd it up all the way after him, as Tim says: I have recommended them to my chaplain, and before this the business is done.

Har. Bravissimo! you rogue! but how shall I get off with the knight?

Jenk. Nay, that must be your contrivance.

Har. I have it—Suppose I was to own the whole design to Sir Gregory, as our plan has not succeeded with his son; and, as he seems to have a tolerable regard for me, it is possible he may assist my scheme on Sir Penurious.

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Jenk. 'Tis worth trying, however:—But he comes.

Sir Greg. Well, good now, Mr. Jenkins have you seen Tim? I can't think where the boy——

Har. 'Tis now time, Sir Gregory, to set you clear with respect to some particulars:—I am now no longer Sir Penurious Trifle, but your friend and relation Jack Hartop.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now, cousin Hartop! as I am a living man—hey—Well, but good now! how, Mr. Jenkins, hey?

Jenk. The story, Sir Gregory, is rather too long to tell you now: but in two words, My friend Hartop has very long had a passion for Miss Trifle, and was apprehensive your son's application would destroy his views—which in order to defeat, he assum'd the character of Sir Penurious!—but he is so captivated with your integrity and friendship, that he rather chooses to forego his own interest, than interrupt the happiness of your son.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! good now, good now, that's kind! who could have thought it, cousin Hartop? lack-a-day! Well, but where's Tim? hey, good now! and who are you?

Jenk. This, Sir, is Jenny, the handmaid of the house.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! a pestelent hussey! Ah, Hartop, you are a wag! a pize of your pots, and your royal oaks!—lack-a-day, who could ha' thought ——ah, Jenny, you're a——But where's Tim?

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Enter Sir GREGORY's *Servant.*

Serv. Wounds, Master! never stir alive if Master Tim has na gone and marry'd Mally Pengrouse.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! how, sirrah, how! good now, good now, cousin Hartop—Mally Pengrouse! who the dickens is she?

Serv. Master Timothy's sweetheart in Cornwall.

Sir Greg. And how came she here? lack-a-day, cousin!

Serv. She tramp'd it up after master. Master Timothy is without, and says as how they be marry'd:—I wanted him to come in, but he's afraid you'll knock'n down.

Sir Greg. Knock'n down!—Good now, let me come at him! I'll—ah, rogue!——Lack-a-day, cousin, show me where he is! I'll——

Har. Moderate your fury, good Sir Gregory; consider, it is an evil without a remedy.

Sir Greg. But what will Dame Winny say?—Good now, such a disparagement to—and then, what will Sir Penurious say? lack-a-day, I am almost distracted! And you, you lubberly dog! why did not you—I'll—ah, cousin Hartop, cousin Hartop! good now, good now!

Har. Dear Sir, be calm;—this is no such surprising matter: we have such instances in the newspapers every day.

Sir Greg. Good now! no, cousin, no.

Har. Indeed, Sir Gregory, it was but last week that Lord Lofty's son marry'd his mother's maid;

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and Lady Betty Forward run away, not a month ago, with her uncle's butler.

Sir Greg. Wonderful! what, in the news?—Good now, that's some comfort, however;—but what will Sir Penurious——

Har. As to that, leave him to me; I have a project to prevent his laughing at you, I'll warrant.

Sir Greg. But how? how, cousin Hartop, how?

Har. Sir Gregory, d'ye think me your friend?

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! ay, cousin, ay.

Har. And would you, in return, serve me in a circumstance that can't injure yourself?

Sir Greg. Good now, to be sure, cousin.

Har. Will you then permit me to assume the figure of your son, and so pay my addresses to Miss Trifle?—I was pretty happy in the imitation of her father; and if I could impose upon your sagacity, I shall find less difficulty with your brother knight.

Sir Greg. Good now! Tim! ah, you could not touch Tim.

Har. I warrant you. But, see, the young gentleman.

Enter TIM.

Sir Greg. Ah! Tim, Tim! little did I——Good now, good now!

Tim. I could not help it now, faith and sole: but if you'll forgive me this time, I'll never do so no more.

Sir Greg. Well, well, if thee can'st forgive thyself, I can forgive thee; but thank my cousin Hartop,

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Har Oh, Sir! if you are satisfy'd, I am rewarded. I wish you joy; joy to you, child.

Sir Greg. Thanks, cousin Hartop.

Enter WAITER.

Wait. Sir, Mrs. Penelope Trifle, with her niece, being come to town, and hearing your Worship was in the House, would be glad to pay you their compliments.

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day! wonderful!—here we are all topsy-turvey again!——What can be done now, cousin Hartop?

Har. Dick! show the ladies in here; but delay them a little. The luckiest incident in the world, Sir Gregory!—If you will be kind enough to lend Jenkins your dress, and Master Timothy will lend me his, I'll make up matters in a moment.

Sir Greg. Ay, ay, cousin.

Tim. Fath and sole, you ſhall have mine dire——

Har. No, no.—Step into the next room a minute, Sir Greogory.

Sir Greg. Ay, aye, where you will.

Tim. Fath, here will be choice sport. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mrs. PENELOPE *and* SUCK, *with* WAITER.

Wait. The gentlemen will wait on you presently.—Would you choose any refreshment?

Suck. A draught of ale, friend, for I'm main dry.

Mrs. Pen. Fie! fie! niece! is that liquor for a young lady? Don't disparage your family and breeding. The person is to be born that ever saw me

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touch any thing stronger than water till I was three-and-twenty.

Suck. Troth, aunt, that's so long ago, that I think there's few people alive who can remember what you did then.

Mrs. Pen. How! gillflirt?—none of your fleers! I am glad here's a husband coming that will take you down: Your tantrums!——You are grown too headstrong and robust for me.

Suck. Gad, I believe you would be glad to be taken down the same way!

Mrs. Pen. Oh! you are a pert——But see your lover approaches. Now Sukey, be careful, child: None of your——

Enter JENKINS *as Sir* GREGORY, *and* HARTOP *as* TIM.

Jenk. Lack-a-day, lady! I rejoice to see you wonderful! and your niece!—Tim, the ladies.

Har. Your servant, Mistress!—I am glad to see you, Miss Suck. *(Salutes her.)* Fath and sole, Mistress, Suck's a fine yonng woman, more or less!

Suck. Yes, I am well enough, I believe.

Jenk. But, Lady, where's my brother Trifle! where is Sir Penurious?

Suck. Father's at home, in expectation of you; and aunt and I be come to town to make preparations.

Jenk. Ay, wonderful!—Pray, Lady, shall I, good now! crave a word in private? Tim, will you and your sweetheart draw back a little?

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Har. Yes, father: Come, Miss, will you jog a tiny bit this way?

Suck. With all my heart.

Jenk. There is, Lady, a wonderful affair has happen'd, good now! Son Tim has fallen in love with a young woman at his uncle's, and 'tis partly to prevent bad consequences, that I am, lack-a-day! so hasty to match him: and one of my men, good now! tells me that he has seen the wench since we have been in town; she has followed us here, sure as a gun, lady! If Tim sees the girl, he'll never marry your niece.

Mrs. Pen. It is indeed, Sir Gregory Gazette, a most critical conjuncture, and requires the most mature deliberation.

Jenk. ——Deliberation! lack-a-day, Lady, whilst we deliberate the boy will be lost.

Mrs. Pen. Why, Sir Gregory Gazette, what operations can we determine upon?

Jenk. Lack-a-day! I know but one.

Mrs. Pen. Administer your proposition, Sir Gregory Gazette: you will have my concurrence, Sir, in any thing that does not derogate from the regulations of conduct; for it would be most preposterous in one of my character, to deviate from the strictest attention.

Jenk. Lack-a-day, lady, no such matter is wanted. But, good now! could not we tack the young couple together directly? your brother and I have already agree'd.

Mrs. Pen. Are the previous preliminaries settled, Sir Gregory Gazette?

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Jenk. Good now! as firm as a rock, lady.

Mrs. Pen. Why, then, to preserve your son, and accomplish the union between our families, I have no objections to the acceleration of their nuptials, provided the child is inclined, and a minister may be procur'd.

Jenk. Wonderful! you are very good, good now! there has been one match already in the house to-day; we may have the same parson. Here! Tim! and young gentlewoman!—Well, Miss! wonderful, and how? has Tim? hey, boy! Is not Miss a fine young lady?

Har. Fath and sole, father, Miss is a charming young woman; all red and white, like Mally—Hum!

Jenk. Hush, Tim! Well, and Miss, how does my boy? he's an honest hearty lad? Has he, good now! had the art? How d'ye like him, young gentlewoman?

Suck. Liken? well enough, I think.

Jenk. Why then, Miss, with your leave, your aunt and I here have agreed, if you are willing, to have the wedding over directly.

Suck. Gad! with all my heart. Ask the young man.

Har. Fath and sole, just as you please; to-day, to-morrow, or when you will, more or less.

Jenk. Good now, good now! then get you in there, there you will find one to do your business: wonderful! matters will soon be managed within. Well, lady, this was good now, so kind! Lack-a-

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day! I verily believe if dame Winny was dead, that I should be glad to lead up such another dance with you, lady.

Mrs. Pen. You are, Sir, something too precipitate: Nor would there, did circumstances concur, as you insinuate, be so absolute a certitude, that I, who have rejected so many matches, should instantaneously succumb.

Jenk. Lack-a-day, lady, good now! I—

Mrs. Pen. No, Sir; I would have you instructed, that had not Penelope Trifle made irrefragable resolutions, she need not so long have preserved her family surname.

Jenk. Wonerful! why, I was only———

Mrs. Pen. Nor has the title of Lady Gazette such resplendent charms, or such bewitching allurements, as to throw me at once into the arms of Sir Gregory.

Jenk. Good now! who says———

Mrs. Pen. Could wealth, beauty, or titles superior to perhaps———

Enter Sir GREGORY, ROGER, *and* TIM.

Tim. Yes, indeed, father; Mr. Hartop knew on't as well as I, and Mr. Jenkins got us a parson.

Sir Greg. Good now, good now! a rare couple of friends! But I'll be even with them! I'll marr their market! Master Jenkins, you have fobb'd me finely.

Jenk. Lack-a-day, what's the matter now?

Sir Greg. Come, come, none of your lack-a-days! none of your gambols, nor your tricks to me: Good now, good now! give me my cloaths! here, take

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your tawdry trappings? I have found you out at last: I'll be no longer your property.

Jenk. Wonderful! what's all this, lady? Good now, good now! what's here! a stage play?

Sir Greg. Play me no plays; but give me my wig? and your precious friend my loving cousin, pize on the kindred, let'n—

Jenk. Good now, good now! what are these folks? as sure as a gun, they're mad.

Sir Greg. Mad! no, no; we are neither mad nor fools: no thanks to you, tho'.

Mrs. Pen. What is all this; can you unravel this perplexity, untwine this mystery, Sir Gregory Gazette?

Sir Greg. He Sir Gregory Gazette? Lack-a-day, lady! you are trick'd, imposed upon, bamboozled: Good now, good now! 'tis I am Sir Gregory Gazette.

Mrs. Pen. How!

Tim. Fath and sole, 'tis true, mistress; and I am his son Tim, and will swear it.

Mrs. Pen. Why, isn't Mr. Timothy Gazette with my niece Susannah Trifle?

Tim. Who, me! Lord, no, 'tis none of I, it is cousin Hartop in my cloaths.

Mrs. Pen. What's this? and pray, who—

Jenk. Why, as I see the affair is concluded, you may, Madam, call me Jenkins. Come, Hartop, you may now throw off your disguise; the knight had like to have embarrassed us.

Mrs. Pen. How, Mr. Jenkins! and would you, Sir, participate of a plot to—

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Har. Madam, in the issue, your family will, I hope, have no great reason to repent. I always had the greatest veneration for Miss Penelope Trifle's understanding; the highest esteem for her virtues can intitle me to the honour of being regarded as her relation:—

Mrs. Pen. Sir, I shall determine on nothing, 'till I am apprised of my brother's resolution.

Har. For that we must wait. Sir Gregory, I must intreat you and your son's pardon for some little liberties I have taken with you both. Mr. Jenkins, I have the highest obligation to your friendship; and, Miss, when we become a little better acquainted, I flatter myself the change will not prove unpleasing.

Such. I know nothing at all about it.

Har. Sir Gregory, we shall have your company at dinner?

Sir Greg. Lack-a-day, no, no, that boy has spoil'd my stomach.—Come, Tim fetch thy rib, and let us be jogging towards Wales; but how thou wilt get off with thy mother—

Tim. Never fear, father—

Since you have been pleas'd our nuptial knot to bless,
We shall be happy all our lives—more or less—

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Mr HARLEY.

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THE DESERT ISLAND.

A DRAMATIC POEM,

IN THREE ACTS.

WRITTEN BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,

FOR J. PARSONS, N° 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1793.

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The Desert Island.

MR. MURPHY, the author of this beautiful dramatic Poem, which was brought before the public in the season of 1759, *acknowledges that the ground-work of his fable is taken from a little piece of one act, entituled* L'Isola Disabitata, *or* The Uninhabited Island, *which came from the elegant and interesting pen of the Abbe Metastasio; and it is worthy of remark, that Mr. Murphy's comedy of* The Way to Keep Him, *and his dramatic tale of* The Desert Island, *were represented for the first time on the same night.*

While we have a Siddons; *a* Pope; *a* Powell; *and last, not least in love—a* Kemble, *to personify the sorrowing heroine of* The Desert Island, *its revival at one of our three theatres might prove acceptable to the public, and profitable to the Manager.*

Our Poet has been peculiarly happy in the pictures he has drawn of secluded nature. The descriptions, which he has given to Constantia, of the captivating scenery which surrounds her, enrich a production worthy of the warmest encomiums of every lover of refined sentiment and genuine poesy.

We flatter ourselves that our generous patrons will approve of our presenting them, occasionally, with subjects similar to the present; and that such subjects will be considered as adding to the value of their volumes, by giving to them that variety which ought to form a grand feature in every collection.

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Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Ferdinand,	-	Mr. Holland
Henrico,	-	Mr. Fleetwood.

Women.

Constantia,	-	Mrs. Pritchard
Sylvia,	-	Miss Pritchard.

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PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY MR. GARRICK

IN THE CHARACTER OF A DRUNKEN POET.

ALL, all shall out—all that I know and feel;
I will, by Heav'n—to higher powers appeal!—
Behold a bard!—no author of to-night—
No, no,—they cant't say that, with all their spite:
Ay, you may frown (*looking behind the scenes*) I'm at you,
great and small—
Your Poet, Players, Managers and all!—
These fools within here, swear that I'm in liquor,
My passion warms me—makes my utt'rance thicker;
I totter too—but that's the gout and pain,—
French wines, and living high, have been my bane.—
From all temptations now, I wisely steer me;
Nor will I suffer one fine woman near me.
And this I sacrifice, to give you pleasure—
For you I've coin'd my brains,—and here's the treasure!
[*Pulls out a manuscript.*
A treasure this of profit and delight!
And all thrown by for his damn'd stuff to-night:—
This is a play would water ev'ry eye!
If I but look upon't, it makes me cry:
This play would tears from blood-stain'd soldiers draw,—
And melt the bowels of hard-hearted law!
Would fore and aft the storm-proof sailor rake;
Keep turtle-eating aldermen awake!
Would the cold blood of ancient maidens thrill,
And make ev'n pretty younger tongues lie still.
This Play not ev'n Managers would refuse,
Had Heav'n but given 'em any brains, to chuse!—
[*Puts up his manuscript.*

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Your bard to-night, bred in the ancient school,
Designs and measures all by critic rule;
'Mongst friends—it goes no farther—he's a fool.
So very classic, and so very dull—
His *Desert Island* is his own dear skull:
No soul to make the Play-house ring and rattle,
No trumpets, thunder, ranting, storms, or battle!
But all your fine poetic prittle-prattle.
The plot is this—A lady's cast away—
"Long before the beginning of the play;"
And they are taken by a fisherman,
The lady and the child—'tis Bays's plan—
So on he blunders—He's an Irishman,—
'Tis all alike—his comic stuff I mean—
I hate all humour—it gives me the spleen;
So damn 'em both, with all my heart, unsight, unseen*.
But shou'd you ruin him, still I'm undone—
I've try'd all ways to bring my Phœnix on—
[*Showing his Play again.*
Flatter I can with any of their tribe—
Can cut and slash—indeed I cannot bribe;
What must I do then?—beg you to subscribe.
Be kind, ye boxes, galleries, and pit—
'Tis but a crown a-piece for all this wit;
All Sterling wit—to puff myself I hate—
You'll ne'er supply your wants at such a rate!
'Tis worth your money, I would scorn to wrong ye—
You smile consent—I'll send my hat among ye.
(*Going, he returns.*
So much beyond all praise your bounties swell!
Not my own tongue, my gra-ti-tude can tell—
"A little flattery sometimes does well."
[*Staggers off.*

* The Way to Keep Him, in three acts, was presented as the After-piece on the same night.

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THE DESERT ISLAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Scene represents a Vale in the Desert Island, surrounded by Rocks, Caverns, Grottos, Flowering Shrubs, Exotic Trees, and Plants growing wild. On one side is a Cavern in a Rock; over the entrance of which appears, in large Characters, an unfinished Inscription. Constantia is discovered at Work at the Inscription, in a romantic Habit of Skins, Leaves, and Flowers; in her Hand she holds a broken Sword, and stands in act to finish the imperfect Inscription.*

After a short pause, she begins.

REST, rest my arm—ye weary sinews, rest—
Awhile forget your office—On this rock
Here sit thee down, and think thyself to stone.
[*Sits down.*
—Would Heav'n I could!—(*Rises.*) Ye shrubs, ye nameless plants,
That wildly gadding 'midst the rifted rocks

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Wreathe your fantastic shoots, ye darksome trees,
That spread yon verdant arch above my head,
Shadowing this solemn scene, ye moss-grown caves,
Romantic grottos,—all ye objects drear;——
Tell me, in pity tell me, have you seen,
Thro' the long series of revolving time,
In which you have inclos'd this lonely mansion,
Say, have ye seen another wretch like me?
No, never!—You, in tend'rest sympathy,
Have join'd my plaints—you, at the midnight hour,
When with uprooted hair I've strew'd the earth,
And call'd my husband gone; have call'd in vain
Perfidious Ferdinand!—you, at that hour,
Have waken'd echo in each vocal cell,
Till ev'ry grove, and ev'ry green hill round,
Mourn'd to my griefs responsive—Well you know
The story of my woes—Ev'n yonder marble
Relenting feels the touch; receives each trace
That forms the melancholy tale——Tho' rude,
And inexpert my hand;—though all uncouth
The instrument—yet there behold my work
Well nigh complete—Let me about it straight.

[*She advances towards the rock.*

Ye deep engraven letters, there remain;
And if, in future time, resistless fate
Shall throw some Briton on this dismal shore;
Then speak aloud;—to his astonish'd sense
Relate my sad, my memorable case—
Alarm his soul, call out——

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STOP TRAVELLER.
HERE
CONSTANTIA,
WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,
SYLVIA,
WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,
THE PERFIDIOUS
FERDINAND;
WHO, PRETENDING TO LAND HER
FOR REFRESHMENT,
FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,
BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER
ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,
WHERE SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.
FRIEND!
WHOE'ER THOU ART,
PITY MY WRONGS;
BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND
(FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET
WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)
I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE R——

Revenge!—the word Revenge is wanting still.
Ye holy pow'rs; if with one pitying look
You'll deign to view me, grant my earnest pray'r!
Let me but finish this my sad inscription;
Then let this busy, this afflicted heart,
Be still at once, and beat my breast no more.

[*She goes on with her work.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. My dearest mother—oh! quite out of breath!
Const. What is the matter, child?

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Syl. My flutt'ring heart
Beats wild with joy—Oh! such an incident!—
Const. What incident, my sweet?
Syl. My little fawn,
My dear, my loveliest fawn—for many days
Whose loss I've mourn'd; for whose dear sake I've left
No corner of the isle unsearch'd;—this moment
O'er the dew-spangled lawn, with printless feet,
Came bounding to me; playful frisk'd about
With inexpressive airs of glad surprise,
With eager signs of transport—Big round tears
Stood trembling in his eye, and seem'd to speak
His fond regret still mingling with his joy.
Const. And is it that, my love, delights thee so?—
Syl. And can you wonder, ma'am?—yes, that delights me,
Transports me, charms me;—he's my darling care,
My dear companion, my sweet little friend,
That loves me, gambols round me, watches still
With anxious tenderness my ev'ry motion,
Pants on my bosom, leaps into my arms,
And wanders o'er me with a thousand kisses.
Before this time he never once stray'd from me;
—I thought I lost him,—but he's found again!
And can you wonder I'm transported thus?
Const. Oh! happy state of innocence!—how sweet
Thy joys, simplicity e'er yet the mind
With artificial passions learns to glow;
Ere taste has ta'en our senses to her school,
Has given each well-bred appetite her laws,

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Taught us to feel imaginary bliss,
Or else expire in elegance of pain.
Syl. Nay, now, again, you're growing grave—'Tis you
Give laws to appetite;—forbid each sense
To minister delight; your eyes are dimm'd
With constant tears; the roses on your cheek
Fade like yon vi'lets, when excessive dews
Have bent their drooping melancholy heads;
Soon they repair their graces; soon recal
Their aromatic lives, and smiling yield
To sighing Zephyr all their balmy sweets.
To grief you're still a prey; still wan despair
Sits with'ring at your heart, and ev'ry feature
Has your directions to be fix'd in woe.
Nay, prithee dry those tears—you make me sad—
—Will you, at length, forget your cares?——
Const. Forget!——
Oh! sweet oblivion, thy all-healing balm
To wretches you refuse?—Can I forget
Perfidious Ferdinand?—His tyrant form
Is ever present—The deluding looks,
Endearing accents, and the soft regards
With which he led me to yon moss-clad cave,
There to repose awhile—Oh! cruel man!
And you, ye conscious wilds, I call you false!
Accomplices in guilt!—The Zephyrs bland
That pant upon each leaf;—the melody
That warbles thro' your groves; the falling fountains
That at each deep'ning cadence lull the mind,
Were all suborn'd against me; all conspir'd

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To wrap me in the silken folds of sleep.
Sudden I wake—Where, where is Ferdinand?
I rave, I shriek—no Ferdinand replies;——
Frantic I rove thro' all your winding glades——
I seek the shore;—no Ferdinand appears—
I climb yon craggy steeps—I see the ship
Unfurling all her sails—I call aloud,
I stamp, cry out;—deaf as the roaring sea
He catches ev'ry gale that blows from heav'n,
And cleaves his liquid way.——

Syl. Why will you thus
Recal your past afflictions?——

Const. Ah! what then,
Thou wretched Constance; what were then thy feelings?
I rend my tresses—beat my breast in vain,
In vain stretch out these ineffectual arms;
Pierce with my frantic cries the wounded air,
Dash my bare bosom on the flinty rock:
Then rise again, and strain my aching sight,
To see the ship still less'ning to my view,
And take the last, last glimpse, as far, far off
In the horizon's verge she lessens still,
Grows a dim speck, and mixes with the clouds
Just vanishing—just lost—ah! seen no more.

Syl. I prithee don't talk so—my heart dies in me—
Why won't you strive a little to forget
This melancholy theme?—The twilight grey
Of morn but faintly streaks the east; the stars
Still glimmer thro' the whit'ning air; the groves
Are mute; yon all-devouring deep lies hush'd—

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The tuneful birds, and the whole brute creation
Still sink, in soft oblivion's slumber wrapp'd,
Forgetful of their cares;—all—all but you
Know some repose.—You pass the dreary night
In tears, and ceaseless grief? then rising wild
Anticipate the dawn, and here resume
Your doleful task, or else ascend the height
Of yonder promontory; there forlorn
You sit, and hear the brawling waves beneath
Lash the resounding shore—your brimful eye
Still fix'd on that sad quarter of the heav'ns
Where my hard father disappear'd.

Const. Yes, there
My melancholy loves to dwell; there loves
To sit, and pine over its hoard of grief:
To roll these eyes o'er all the sullen main,
In hopes some sail may this way shape its course,
With the glad tidings of the human race!
Could I behold that dear, that wished-for-sight;
Could I but see some vestiges of man,
Some mark of social life, ev'n tho' the ship
Should shun this isle, and court propitious gales
Beneath some happier clime; yet still the view
Would cheer my soul, and my heart bound with joy
At that faint prospect of my fellow-creatures.
But not for me such transport!—not for me—
Dear native land, I now no more must see thee;
Condemn'd in ever-during solitude to mourn,
From thy sweet joys, society, debarr'd!

Syl. But to your happiness what's wanting here?
Full many a time I've heard you praise the arts,

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The polish'd manners, and gay scenes of bliss
Which Europe yields—yet ever and anon
I from your own discourse can gather too,
That happiness is all unknown to Europe;
That envy there can dwell, and discontent:
The smile, that wakens at another's woe;
The heart, that sickens at another's praise;
The tongue, that carries the malignant tale;
The little spirit, that subverts a friend;
Fraud, perfidy, ingratitude, and murder.
Now sure, with reason, I prefer these scenes
Of innocence, tranquillity, and joy!

Const. Alas! my child, 'tis easy to forego
Untasted sweets, pleasures you never knew.

Syl. Are we not here what you yourself have told me
In Europe sovereigns are?—Here we have fix'd
Our little sylvan reign.—The guiltless race
Of animals, that roam the lawns and woods,
Are tractable and willing subjects;—pay
Passive obedience to us—and yon sea
Becomes our tributary; hither rolls
In each hoarse-murm'ring tide his various stores
Of daintiest shell-fish—The unbidden earth,
Of human toil all ignorant, pours forth
Whatever to the eye, or taste, can prove
Rare, exquisite, and good—At once the spring
Calls forth its green delights, and summer's blush
Glows on each purple branch. The seasons here
On the same tree, with glad surprize,
Behold each other's gifts arise:
Spontaneous fruits around us grow,
For ever here the Zephyrs blow;

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Shrubs ever flow'ring,
Shades embow'ring;
Heav'nly spots,
Cooling grots,
Verdant mountains,
Falling fountains;
Pure limpid rills,
Adown the hills,
That wind their way,
And o'er the meadows play,
Enamour'd of th' enchanted ground.

Const. What is this waste of beauty, all these charms
Of cold, inanimate, unconscious nature,
Without the social sense?

Syl. Those beauteous tracts,
Which you so much regret, are full of men;
And men you know, are animals of prey:
I'm sure that you yourself have told me so
A thousand times.———

Const. And if I have, my child,
I told a dismal truth.—Oh! they are false,
Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers;
Their unrelenting hearts no harbour know
For honour, truth, humanity, or love.

Syl. Well then, in this lone isle, this dear retreat,
From them, at least, we're free.—

Const. Poor innocent!
I can't but grieve for her— [*Bursts into tears.*

Syl. Why fall afresh
Those drops of sorrow?—pray you, now give o'er.

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Const. My heart will break—I do not grieve, my child———
I can't conceal my tears—they will have way —
Syl. Nay, if you love me, sure you will not thus
Make my heart ake within me!—
Const. No, my sweet—
I will not weep—all will be well, my love—
Oh! misery!—I can't,—I can't contain—
The black ingratitude!— [*Weeps.*
Syl. Say, is there aught
Sylvia can do, that may afford you comfort?
If there is, tell me—Shall I fetch my fawn?
Dry up your tears, and he is yours this moment.
Const. No, Sylvia, no!—
Syl. He must, he shall be yours.
Refuse me not. I'll run and bring him to you. [*Exit.*

CONSTANTIA *alone.*

Alas! I fear my brain will turn—The sun
Full sixteen times has made his annual course
Since here I've dragg'd a miserable being,
The victim of despair; which long e'er now,
To frenzy kindling, must have forc'd me dash
My brain in madness on yon flinty rocks,
And end my pangs at once; if the keen instinct
Of strong maternal love had not restrain'd
My wild disorder'd soul, and bade me live
To watch her tender infancy; to rear
Her blooming years; with fond delighted care
To tend each blossom of her growing mind,
And see light gradual dawning on her soul,

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And yet to see her thus,——to see her here,
Cut off from ev'ry social bliss; condemn'd,
Like some fair flow'r that in a desert blows,
To breathe its sweets into the passing wind,
And waste its bloom, all unperceiv'd, away!
It is enough to break a mother's heart.
Let me not think on't—let me shun that thought.

[*Sits down and sings.*

I.

What tho' his guilt my heart hath torn,
Yet lovely is his mien;
His eyes mild op'ning as the morn,
Round him each grace is seen.
But oh! ye nymphs, your loves ne'er let him win,
For oh! deceit and falsehood dwell within.

II.

From his red lips his accents stole,
Soft as kind vernal snows;
Melting they came, and in the soul
Desire and joy arose.
But oh! ye nymphs, ne'er listen to his art,
For oh! base falsehood rankles in his heart.

III.

He left me in this lonely state!
He fled, and left me here,
Another Ariadne's fate,
To mourn the live-long year.
He fled—but oh! what pains the heart must prove,
When we reveal the crimes of him we love!

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Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. I cannot bring him now—in yonder stream
That thro' its pebbled channel glides along
Soft-murm'ring to the sea, he stands to cool
His beauteous form in the pure limpid rill.

Const. To thee he causes joy—but joy to me,
There's nothing now can bring—Left by my husband!
By the false barb'rous man!——

Syl. And yet this man,
This false, deceitful man, you still regret.
I vow, I can't but think, 'midst all your grief,
All your reproaches, your complaints against him,
That still this false, this cruel fell deceiver,
Has found—I know not why—within your breast
Some tender advocate to plead his cause.

Const. No, Sylvia, no; my love is turn'd to hate!—

Syl. Then dry your sorrows, and this day begin
A happier train of years—and lo! the sun
Emerges from the sea—he lifts his orb
Above the purpled main, and streams abroad
His golden fluid o'er the world—the birds
Exulting wake their notes—all things rejoice,
And hills, and groves, and rocks, and vallies smile;
Let me intreat you then forget your cares,
And share the general bliss.——

[*The sun is seen to rise at a distance, as it were out of the sea.*

Const. Once more all hail,
Thou radiant power, who in your bright career

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Or rising or descending, hast beheld
My never-ceasing woe;—again thou climb'st
In orient glory, and recall'st the cares
And toils of man and beast!—but oh! in all
Your flaming course, your beams will never light
Upon a wretch so lost, so curst as I am.

Syl. And yet, my mother———

Const. Mine are pangs, my child,
Strokes of adversity, no time can cure,
No lenient arts can soften or assuage.
But I'll not grieve thee, Sylvia—I'll retire
To some sequester'd haunt—There, all forlorn,
I'll sit, and wear myself away in thought. [*Exit.*

SYLVIA *alone.*

Alas! how obstinately bent on grief
Is her whole mind!—the votarist of care?
In vain I try to soften her afflictions,
And with each art beguile her from her woe.
I chide, intreat, caress, yet all in vain.
And what to me seems strange, perverse, and wond'rous,
The more I strive, the more her sorrows swell:
Her tears the faster fall, fall down her cheek
In streams so copious, and such bitter anguish,
That I myself, at length, I know not how,
Catch the soft weakness, and o'erpow'r'd with grief,
Flow all-dissolving in unbidden tears.
Assist her, Heav'n.—Her heart will break at last—
I tremble at the thought—I'll follow straight
And still implore, beseech, try ev'ry way

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To reconcile her to herself and me.
But see, look yonder! what a sight is there!
What can it mean, that huge enormous mass
That moves upon the bosom of the deep!
—A floating mountain!—no—a mountain never
Could change its place—for such a monstrous bulk
How light it urges on its way—how quick,
How rapid in its course!—What can it be—
I'll to the shore, and from the pointed rock
That juts into the waves, at leisure view
This wond'rous sight, and what it is, explore.

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Another view of the Island, with an opening to the sea between several hills and rocks.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Sylvia.

STILL I behold it—still it glides along
Thro' the tumultuous sea—and lo! before it
The waves divide! and now they close again,
Leaving a track of angry foam behind.
It must be, sure, some monster of the deep;
And, see!—upon its huge broad back it bears
Expanded wings, that, spreading to the wind,
Lie broad incumbent o'er the surge beneath—
—Ah! save me, save me! what new forms appear!
What shapes of unknown beings rise before me!
From yon huge monster's side they issue forth,
And bolt upon the shore!—Behold, they stop;
And now with eager disconcerted pace
Precipitate rush forward on the isle,——
Now 'mongst the rocks they wind their silent way.
Protect me, Heav'n! defend me! shield me!—ah!
Hide me, ye woods, within your deep recess;
Ne'er may these monsters penetrate your haunts,
Ne'er trace my footsteps thro' your darksome ways.
Behind the covert of this woodbine bow'r
Oh! let me rest conceal'd! [*She retires.*

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Enter FERDINAND *and* HENRICO.

Hen. No trace appears,
No vestige here is seen of human kind.
'Tis drear, 'tis waste, and unfrequented all.
And hark!—what noise?—from yonder toiling deep
How dreadful sounds the pealing roar!—My friend,
My valued Ferdinand, 'twere best retire.
This cannot be the place.———

Fer. Oh! my Henrico,
This is the fatal shore. The well-known scene;
Yon bay, yon rocks, yon mountains, from whose brow
Th' imbow'ring forest overhangs the deep;
Each well-remember'd object strikes my view
Answers the image in my mind preserv'd,
Engraven there by love's recording hand,
And never, but with life, to fade from thence.

Hen. And yet thy love-enfeebled soul may form
Imaginary tokens of resemblance.
The soil unbeaten seems by mortal step.

Fer. My heart in ev'ry pulse confirms it to me.
This is the place, the dreary spot, where fate
Began to wave the tissue of my woes.
Oh! I was curst, abhorr'd of Heav'n, or else
I ne'er had trusted the contentious weaves,
But kept my store of happiness at home.

Hen. Repine not for an action that arose
From filial piety. 'A father's mandate
Requir'd obedience from you.

Fer. To his summons
I paid a glad attention. Yet, good Heav'n!

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Why in that early period of my bliss
Should then his orders come, to dash my joys?
Oh! I was blest with all that rarest beauty,
With all that ev'ry Venus of the mind,
The tender heart, and the enliv'n'd wit,
Could pour delightful on the raptur'd sense
Of the young bridegroom; whose admiring eyes
Still hung enamour'd on her ev'ry charm,
And thence drank long inspiring draughts of love,
Unsated still, still kindling at the view.

Hen. Indeed, my Ferdinand, thy fate was hard!

Fer. Each soft desire, each joy refin'd was mine.
The hours soft glided by, and as they pass'd
Scatter'd new blessings from their balmy wings;
They saw our ever-new delight; they saw
A blooming offspring crown our mutual loves;
The mother's features, and her ev'ry grace
In this our daughter exquisitely trac'd.
But to be torn from that supreme of bliss!
My wife, Constantia,—and my beauteous babe,
Here to be left on this untravell'd isle,
To pine in bitterness of want! their bed
The cold bare earth, while the inclement winds
From yonder main came howling round their heads,
Until at length the friendly hand of death
In pity threw his shroud upon their woes.

Hen. Too sure, I fear, they're lost.

Fer. Perhaps, my friend,
Perhaps, when grasping in the pangs of death,
When ev'ry beauty faded from her cheek,
And her eye languish'd motionless and dim,

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Perhaps ev'n then, in that sad dismal hour,
My name still hover'd on her quiv'ring lips,
And nought but death could tear me from her heart.

Hen. Her tend'rest thoughts, no doubt, were fix'd on thee.

Fer. Her tend'rest thoughts? Oh! no: her utmost rage.
Who knows, Henrico, but she deem'd me false;
Deem'd me a vile deserter from her arms?
She did, she must: each strong appearance join'd
To mark me guilty. Oh! that thought strikes deep
Its scorpion stings into my very heart.
Could she but think me so refin'd in guilt,
So exquisite a villain, as to cause
A moment's anguish in that tender breast,
Where all the loves, where all the virtues dwelt;
'Twere misery, 'twere torture in th' extreme!
And yet she thought me such; by Heav'n she did;
Accus'd me of the worst, the blackest treason,
Of treason to my love! Stung with th' idea
She roam'd this isle, and to these desert wilds
Pour'd forth her lamentable tale. Who knows
But on some craggy cliff whole nights she sat
Raving in madness to the moon's pale gleam;
Until at length all kindling into phrenzy,
Clasping her infant closer to her breast,
With desperation wild from off the rock
Headlong she plung'd into the roaring sea,
And her last accents murmur'd faithless—Ferdinand!

Hen. Distract not thus your soul with fancied woes.
She could not think thee faithless; thee, whose mind,
Whose ev'ry virtue, were so well approv'd,

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Fer. Still will I hope she did not. Oh! she knew
I made that voyage in duty to a father.
Awhile we steer'd a happy course, until
Beneath the burning line, from whence the sun
In strait direction pours his ardent blaze
On ev'ry fever'd sense, a storm arose,
Sudden and wild; as if a war of nature
Were thund'ring o'er our heads. Full twenty days
It drove us headlong on the dashing surge
Far from our destin'd way, until at length
In evil hour we landed on this isle.

SYLVIA *returns, and peeps from behind a hedge.*

Syl. Methought I heard a sound, as if they both
Held mutual converse. Yonder, lo! they stand:
They do not follow me. What can they be?

Fer. There is the spot, just where yon aged tree
Imbrowns the plain beneath, on which the villains,
The unrelenting band of pirates, seiz'd me.
There I receiv'd my wound, and there I fought
Till my sword shiver'd in my hand. Worn out,
Oppress'd by numbers, pow'rless, and disarm'd,
They bore me headlong to the beach; in vain
Piercing the air with horrid cries; in vain
Back tow'rd the cave, where poor Constantia slept,
With her lov'd infant-daughter in her arms,
Straining my ardent eyes; my eyes alone!
For oh! their cruelty had bound my arms,
And tears and looks were all I then could use.

Syl. The voice but indistinctly strikes my ear.
Would they would turn this way.

Fer. Fetter'd, ty'd down,

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They dragg'd me to the vessel. Bore me hence.
In vain our ship pursu'd: in vain gave chace.
Form'd with detested skill, the guilty bark
In which they plung'd me, gliding o'er the main,
Outstripp'd their tardy course. We steer'd away
Far to the regions of accursed bondage.
Far from Constantia, far from ev'ry joy
A doating husband, and delighted father
Feels in mix'd rapture with his wife and child.
Oh! I could pour my plaints—but I'll not wound
Thy ear, my friend, with further lamentation.

Hen. Would Heaven I could remove the cause.

Fer. Alas!
That cannot be. Thou can'st not bid return
The irrevocable flight of time; recal
The moments of our young delight; annul
And render void, what once the hand of fate
Hath from its stores of woe pour'd down upon me.

Syl. (Half concealed.) Why will they stand with looks averted thus?
I long to see their countenance and mien.

Fer. But yet, thou best of friends, yet grant me this.
Assist my search; Oh! let me roam around
This fatal shore! the isle's circumference
Circles a scanty space. We cannot lose
Each other here. Do thou pursue that path
That leads due east: this way I'll bend my course.

Hen. By Heav'n there is no task of hardihood,
Of toil, or danger, but I'll try for thee;
For thee, my friend; to thee I owe my life,

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And that more precious boon, my liberty:
Thou hast releas'd me from the galling chain,
From slav'ry's bitter pressure. 'Twas thy skill
That form'd the plan of freedom, seiz'd the vessel,
And made your friends the partners of your flight.
For thee I'll roam around: but oh! I fear
Our search will prove in vain.

Fer. Too sure it will.
And yet it is the doom of love like mine
To dwell for ever on the sad idea
Of the dear object lost; to visit oft
(A lonely pilgrim) ev'ry well-known scene,
Each haunted glade, where the lov'd object stray'd;
To call each circumstance of pass'd delight
Back to the soul; in fond excursions seek
Her dear lamented form. Then, oh! my friend,
Then let me taste that sad, that pensive comfort.
Range thro' these wilds; ascend each craggy steep,
Try in each grotto, in each gloomy cave,
If haply there remain some vestige of Constantia.
[*Exit.*

Hen. On yonder beach we'll meet again. Farewel!

Syl. Conceal thee, Sylvia. Ah!—it comes this way!
Then let me seek the covert of the woods,
Where nods the brownest horror; there lie safe,
From the unusual sight of these strange beings. [*Exit.*

HENRICO, *solus.*

How cruel is my friend's condition! Doom'd
For ever to regret, yet never find

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The object of his soul. His early love
He lavish'd all on her: with her it goes
To the dark grave, and leaves him hapless here
To die a lingering death. Yet still I'll try,
By ev'ry office friendship can perform,
To heal the wound that preys upon his life. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Another Part of the Island.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. What have my eyes beheld? My flutt'ring heart
Beats quick in strange emotions. From yon grove
Of tufted trees I saw this nameless being
Walk o'er the russet heath. Its face appear'd
Confess'd to view. It cannot be a man.
No lines of cruelty deform'd his visage.
Were it a man, his untam'd, savage soul,
Would strongly speak in each distorted feature.
This was all pleasing, amiable, and mild:
A gentle sorrow, bright'ning into smiles,
Such as bespoke a calm, yet feeling spirit,
Sat on its peaceful brow, and o'er it threw
A gentle gleam of sweetness and of pain.
It cannot be a woman neither: no;
The dress accords not with that mode which oft
My mother hath describ'd. Whate'er it be,
Attraction dwells about it; winning smiles;
Assuasive airs of tenderness and joy,
I'll seek my mother; she perhaps may know
These forms, to me unusual. By this row
Of darksome pines, my steps, all unperceiv'd,

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May gain the place where with assiduous hand
She works, and teaches the rude rocks to tell
Her mournful elegy. What mean my feet?
Why stand they thus forgetful of their office?
Why heaves th' involuntary sigh? And why
Thus in quick pulses beats my heart? My eyes
A misty dimness covers: in my ears
Strange murmurs sound; my very breath is lost.
What can it be?—I know thee, Fear!—'tis thou
That causest this! And yet it can't be fear.
Fear cannot thrill with pleasure thro' the veins;
Knows not this dubious joy, these grateful trem-
blings.
I cannot guess what these emotions mean,
Nor what this busy thing my heart would want!
Let me seek shelter in my mother's arms. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Changes to the first View of the Island, where* CONSTANTIA'*s Inscription is seen.*

Enter FERDINAND.

Fer. No; never more shall these fond eyes behold
her.
Lost, lost, my poor Constantia lost! In vain
I search these gloomy woods; in vain call out
Her honour'd name to ev'ry hill and dale.
My eyes are false, or on the craggy base
Of yonder rock some instrument appears,
The mark of human kind. A broken sword!
Oh! all ye Heav'nly pow'rs!—the very same!
This once was mine! Unfaithful to its trust,
It fail'd me at my utmost need. I see

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The well-known characters; the very words
That form'd its motto. 'Tis, it is the same.
Oh! were Constantia found! What do I see?
All o'er with hair the flinty rock bestrew'd!
These were her decent tresses; these in anguish
She tore relentless from her beauteous head,
Up by the roots she tore, and scatter'd wild
To all the passing winds. She still may live!
Constantia!—ha!—what mystic characters
Are hewn into the rock?—My name appears!

[*He reads.*

STOP TRAVELLER.
HERE
CONSTANTIA,
WITH HER LITTLE INFANT,
SYLVIA,
WAS DESERTED BY HER HUSBAND,
THE PERFIDIOUS
FERDINAND;
WHO, PRETENDING TO LAND HER
FOR REFRESHMENT,
FROM THE DANGERS OF A STORMY SEA,
BARBAROUSLY LEFT HER
ON THIS UNHOSPITABLE ISLAND,
WHERE SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Support me, Heav'n! Ah! no; withold your aid,
Ye unrelenting pow'rs, and let me thus,
Each vital spark subsiding, thus expire.

[*Leans against the rock.*

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Enter HENRICO.

Hen. What, hoa! my Ferdinand! This way the sound
Struck on my list'ning ear. What means my friend
Thus growing to the rock, transform'd to stone,
A breathing statue, 'midst these shapeless piles?

Fer. Behold! read there!

Hen. Letters engrav'd!

[*He reads part to himself, and then repeats aloud.*

SHE ENDED HER DEPLORABLE LIFE.

Alas! my friend—

(*They gaze speechless at each other for some time, then Ferdinand falls*)

The storm of grief o'erpow'rs his feeble spirits.
Now rouze thy strength, my Ferdinand, and bear
This load of sorrow like a man.

Fer. I do;
Thou see'st I do. I do not weep, my friend.
These eyes are dry; their very source is dry.
I am her cruel husband to the last.

Hen. Oh! thou wert ever kind and tender to her.

Fer. Tender and kind!—look there!—there stands the black,
The horrid roll of guilt denounc'd against me.
Lo! the dread characters! let me peruse
The whole sad record; of this bitter woe
Still deeper drink, and gorge me with affliction.

[*He reads.*

FRIEND!

WHOE'ER THOU ART,

PITY MY WRONGS!

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BUT AGAINST MY HUSBAND
(FOR LOVE LIKE MINE CANNOT FORGET
WHERE ONCE WITH DELIGHT IT FIXED)
I CHARGE YOU NEVER MEDITATE R———

Revenge, she meant to say: the word's begun!
But death untimely stopt her hand. Oh! misery!
She thought me false, and yet could love me still.
The wound now pierces deeper. Had she loath'd me,
Abhorr'd me, curs'd me, 'twere not half the torture
This angel goodness causes. And to lose her!
To lose a mind like hers, that thus could pour
Such unexampled tenderness and love,
Amidst the keenest anguish! On the earth
Measure thy length, thou wretch accurst! there lie,
For ever lie, and to these woods and wilds
Howl out thy griefs in madness and despair.

Hen. I feel, I feel thy sorrows. Oh! my friend,
Cruel event! your tears, alas! are just.
Those gushing sorrows may assuage your grief,
This storm of rage attemp'ring into peace.

Fer. Who talks of peace! Let phrenzy seize my brain,
Come, moon-struck madness, with thy glaring eye
And clanking chain; come, shoot thy kindling fires
Into my inmost soul; blast ev'ry pow'r;
Raze each idea out! tear up at once
The seat of memory—no—leave me that;
Still leave me memory, to picture forth
Constantia's lovely form, that I may sit,
With unclad sides, upon some blasted heath,
And gloat upon her image; see her still,

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See her whole days with fancy's gushing eye,
And gaze on that alone.
Hen. Arise, my friend,
And quit this fatal shore.
Fer. And quit this shore!
But whither turn? Ah! whither shall I go?
Where shelter me from misery?—This isle
Shall be my journey's bound.
Hen. What can'st thou mean?
Fer. Never again to draw the vital air
But where my love expir'd! To feed my soul
With those sad objects, this sepulchral tale,
Ev'n to the height of yet un-heard-of anguish:
To print my pious kisses on the rock;
To bathe the ground, which her dear footsteps press'd,
With the incessant tears of burning anguish;
To make these wilds all vocal with her name,
'Till this cold lifeless tongue shall move no more.
Hen. By Heav'n you must not stay.
Fer. Farewel! farewel!
Consult thy happiness!—for ever here
By fate I'm doom'd to stay. Alas, Constantia!
To perish with thy infant here! No friend
To close thy ghastly orbs! Thy pale remains
On the bare earth expos'd, without the tribute
Of a fond husband's tears o'er thy dead corse;
Without the last sad obsequies! Yet here
I still will raise an empty sepulchre.
There shall no cold, unconscious marble form,
In mockery of imitated woe,
Rend o'er the fancy'd urn, myself will be

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The sad, the pensive, monumental figure,
Distilling real anguish o'er the tomb;
Till wasting by degrees I moulder down,
And sink to silent dust.

Hen. What man could do
Already you've perform'd——

Fer. Prithee no more.
I will about it straight. This place affords
Materials for the work. Thither I'll bring
Whate'er can deck the scene. Constantia, yes:
I will appease thy discontented shade.
Then follow thee to yonder realms of bliss. [*Exit.*

Hen. His vehemence of grief bears down his reason.
He must not linger here. His stay were fatal.
Force will be necessary; to our vessel
I'll hasten back, and call some trusty friends
To bear him from this melancholy shore.

THE END OF THE SECOND ACT.

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ACT III.

The Scene continues.

Enter SYLVIA.

Sylvia.

THRO' the thick-woven shade of arching bow'rs,
Through walks, where never sun-beam pierc'd, at length
I've gain'd this deep-encircled vale. Ah, me!
I feel strange tremors still. She is not here!
Constantia!—no reply: her mournful task
Waits for her ling'ring hand.—What noise is that?
I heard some steps advancing. 'Tis my fawn
That rustles thro' the forest glade: he stops
And looks, then runs, and stops again, to take
A fearful gaze! He too perhaps has seen
These unknown beings. Yonder lo! he stands
In mute expressive wonder. Heav'n protect me!
Thro' this close path, that gradual winding up
Leads on to plains, to woods, to verdant lawns,
Embosom'd in the rock, I'll journey up.
The day now glows intense, but by the rills,
That thro' embow'ring groves come purling down,
I oft can lay me, and enjoy each breeze
That plays amid those craggy scenes. A noise
From yonder interwoven branches. Ha!
Ye guardian angels, save me!—see, see there!
It comes again!

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Enter HENRICO.

Hen. What beauteous form in these forlorn abodes
Attracts my wond'ring eyes!

Syl. Ye heav'nly powers! [*Retiring from him.*

Hen. It swims before my sight. Whate'er thou art,
Virgin or goddess—Oh! a goddess sure!
Thou goddess of these mansions! for thy looks
Beam heav'nly radiance, with propitious ears
Accept my supplication.

Syl. Ha! it speaks!
It speaks! what dost thou mean?

Hen. Oh! say what place,
What clime is this? And what art thou that thus
Adorn'st this lone retreat?

Syl. Will you first
Promise to come no nearer?

Hen. With devotion
As true as ever pilgrim offer'd up
In holy fervor to his saint, I promise.

Syl. How gentle its demeanor! Tell me now
Who and what art thou?

Hen. I am born to misery;
A man, whom fate——

Syl. A man!—art thou a man?
Defend me Heav'n! ye guardian pow'rs protect me!
[*Running away.*

Hen. Nay, fly me not: a sudden impulse here
Bids me pursue. Forgive, thou unknown fair,
That with soft violence I thus presume
To force thee measure back thy steps again.
[*He brings her back.*

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Syl. Force me not thus, inhuman, barb'rous man!
What have I said—Oh! worthy gen'rous man!
Thus on my knees I beg; have mercy on me.
I never did you harm; indeed I did not.

Hen. Arise, (*raises her*) thou lovely tenant of these woods,
And let me thus, thus as befits the man
Whose mind runs o'er with rapture and surprize,
Whose heart throbs wild with mingled doubt and joy;
Thus let me worship this celestial form,
This heav'nly brightness, to my wond'ring eyes
That sheds such influence, as when an angel
Breaks thro' a flood of glory to the sight
Of some expiring saint, and cheers his soul
With visions of disclosing heav'n.

Syl. He kneels!
He kneels to me! How mild his every look!
How soft each word!—Can man be tender thus,
Of gentle mien, compassionate and kind?

Hen. In me thou see'st a wretch, whose heart is prone
To melt at each idea beauty prints
On his delighted sense; and sure such beauty,
Touch'd by the hand of harmony, adorn'd
With inexpressive graces, well may claim
My lowliest adoration and my love.

Syl. This language all is new; but still it has
I know not what of charming in't, that gains
Upon the list'ning ear. If this be falsehood,
Then falshood can assume a pleasing look.

Hen. Oh! if thou art as gracious as thou'rt fair,

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Say have you seen Constantia? when and where,
And how did she expire?

Syl. Constantia lives.
Why did'st thou say expire? My mother lives,
Lives in these blest abodes.

Hen. Oh! gentle Sylvia,
So I will call thee, daughter of Constantia,
Oh! fly and find her out. Mean time I'll seek
Th' afflicted Ferdinand.——

Syl. What dost thou say!
Can he, can Ferdinand be here? That false,
Perfiduous, barb'rous man; can he be here?

Hen. He is, my fair; not barbarous nor false.
Fortune that made him wretched, could no more.
Anon you'll know the whole; to waste a moment
In conference now, and longer to suspend
The meeting of this pair, who now in agony
Bemoan their lot, were barbarous indeed.

Syl. But may I trust him? Won't he do her harm?

Hen. He won't, my beauteous fair.

Syl. Is he like you?

Hen. His goodness far transcends mine.

Syl. Then I think
I'll venture to comply. Let's go together.

Hen. Oh! I could tend thy steps for ever; hear
Soft accents warbling from thy vermeil lip;
Watch thy mild-glancing eye; behold how grace,
Whate'er you do, which ever way you bend,
Guides each harmonious movement; but this hour
Is friendship's due. Then let us instant fly
Thro' diff'rent windings; thou to seek Constantia,

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And I to find her husband: hap'ly so,
Their meeting will be soon. Meantime farewell!
I'll bring him to this very spot. Adieu!
For a short interval adieu, my love!

Syl. Farewell!—Another word: pray what's your name?

Hen. Fair excellence, Henrico I am call'd.

Syl. Pray do not tarry long, Henrico.

Hen. Why
That pleasing charge, my sweet?

Syl. I cannot tell;
But as you're leaving me, each step you move
My spirits sink; a melancholy gloom
Darkens the scene around, and I, methinks,
Helpless in solitude, am left again,
To wander all alone a dreary way.

Hen. Thou angel sweetness! I'll return anon;
Yes, I will come, and at that lovely shrine
Pour out my adoration and my vows.
Yes, I will come to part from thee no more.
A moment now farewell! [*Exit.*

SYLVIA. (*alone.*)

Farewell! be sure you keep your word. He's gone,
And yet is with me still. Absent I hear
And see him in his absence: still his looks
Beam with mild dignity, and still his voice
Sounds in my ear delightful. What it means,
This new-born sense, this wonderful emotion,
Unfelt till now, and mix'd of pain and joy,
I cannot guess. How my heart flutters in me!

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I'll not perplex myself with vain conjecture.
What'er the cause, th' effect, I feel, is pleasing.

[CONSTANTIA *is heard singing within.*]

Ah me! what noise is that? My mother's voice!
Again she pours her melancholy forth,
As sweetly plaintive, as when Philomel,
Beneath some poplar shade, bemoans her young,
And sitting pensive on the lonely bough,
Her eye with sorrow dimn'd, she tunes her dirge,
Warbling the night away; while all around
The vocal woodland, and each hill and dale,
Ring with her griefs harmonious. Hark! that way
It sounds. All gracious pow'rs direct me to her.

[*Exit.*

Enter CONSTANTIA.

Const. From walk to walk, from glade to glade, o'er all
The sea-girt isle, o'er ev'ry mountain's top,
I roam from place to place; but, oh! no place
Affords relief to me. The sun now leads
The sultry hours, and from his burning ray
Each living thing retires; yet I endure
His fiercest rage. The fever in my mind
Heeds not external circumstance: each day
Sees this sad heart fresh bleeding as at first.
Delay not thus, ye cruel fates, but come
And wrap me in eternal rest. Till then
Let me pursue my melancholy task.

[*Works at the inscription.*

Enter FERDINAND.

Fer. Away with their ill-tim'd officious care,

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I'll none of it. 'Tis cruelty, not friendship:
'Tis misery protracted; 'tis with art,
Inhuman art to lengthen out the life
Of him who groans in torment. No; they never shall
Compel me back to a base world again!
I've liv'd enough: my course is ended here;
For here Constantia lies. Ye heav'nly pow'rs!
What means upon yon consecrated ground
That visionary form, with lifted arm
And gleaning steel, that seems in act to carve
The rugged stone?

Canst. What is't I hear! a voice!
A groan from whence—Ha! [*Seeing Ferdinand.*

Fer. 'Tis Constantia's form!
Her discontented shade, that hovers still
About this place.

Const. Delusive air-drawn shape
Of that perfiduous—ah! [*She faints away.*

Fer. Leave me not thus.
Oh! ever gracious, ever gentle, say——
'Tis gone, in sullen silence gone!

Enter HENRICO.

Hen. Quick let me find him, to his raptur'd ear
Give the delightful tidings—Ha!

Fer. And thus
I sink at once and follow my belov'd.
[*Falls into Henrico's arms.*

Hen. He faints, he faints: the chilling dews of death
Distil thro' every pore. My Ferdinand,

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Awake, arise, and hear the joyful sounds
Of happiness restor'd. His eyes unfold
To seek fair day-light, and now close again
As if they sicken'd at the view.

Fer. Forbear,
And let me die!

Hen. Constantia lives! she lives
Once more to fold thee in her warm embrace.

Fer. I saw her fleeting form: sullen and pale
It vanish'd from my sight.

Const. Alas! no help!
Oh! death where art thou? [*Coming to herself.*

Hen. Whence that voice?
Constantia there! behold! she too entranc'd
Lies stretch'd upon the ground.

Fer. Where is Constantia?
Oh! let me catch the fleeting shade. 'Tis she!
It is my wife! it is Constantia still!
Oh! extasy of bliss! She still survives!

Const. 'Tis mere illusion all; the false creation
Of some deceitful dream.

Fer. 'Tis real all.
Again I fold her thus! the known embrace
Hath thrill'd its wonted transport to my heart.
My life, my soul, thy Ferdinand is come!

Const. And com'st thou then, inhuman as thou art,
Com'st thou again to wreak thy malice on me?

Fer. By heav'n I ne'er was false. Dash not my joys
With thy unkind suspicion of my love,
While thus transported far above the lot
Of human bliss, I press my lips to thine,

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Inhaling balmy sweets, and all my soul
Runs o'er with bliss, with wonder and delight.
Const. Did'st thou not meanly leave me here a prey——
Fer. And can Constantia deem me then so base?
Can she believe me such a vile betrayer?
Can'st thou?—
Const. On this unhospitable shore
Left as I was——
Fer. Oh, misery! thou we'rt!
While I was dragg'd by an insidious band
Of pirates, savage blood-hounds! into bondage.
But witness heav'n, witness ye midnight hours
That heard my ceaseless groans, how dear thy image
Grew to my very heart!
Const. And hast thou then
Been doom'd to slavery?
Fer. I have.
Const. And groan'd
This long, long time beneath oppression's rod?
Fer. E'er since these eyes have gaz'd, delighted, on thee,
The bitter draught of misery was mine.
Const. And wert thou true indeed?
Fer. By Heav'n I was.
Const. And have I then accus'd thee? Have I pour'd
A thousand strong complaints against thee? Call'd
High-judging Heav'n to witness to my wrongs?
Told all these wilds, these rocks, these wood-crown'd hills
Of injur'd truth and violated love?

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Falsely I talk'd, unjustly I complain'd
Of injur'd truth and violated love;
My Ferdinand was true! again 'tis giv'n
With his lov'd form to glad these eyes, to rush
With eager transport to his fond embrace,
To cling around his neck, and growing to him,
Pour the warm tears of rapture and of love.

[*They embrace.*

Enter SYLVIA.

Syl. I heard my mother's voice. What do I see?
In a man's arms! embracing and embrac'd!

Fer. Is that my Sylvia? Oh! it must be so.
My child, my child survives! survives to take
A raptur'd father's blessing, and o'erpay
His suff'rings past by this excess of joy,
This mingled interview of tears and kisses.

Syl. How gentle his deportment too! I feel
A soft attraction bind my soul to his.
Are these the men whom thou so oft describ'd
Inexorable, cruel, fell deceivers?

Const. I was deceiv'd myself, my child; for truth,
Honour, and love, and constancy, are theirs.
I now have proof of unexampled goodness.

Syl. Indeed I strongly thought you wrong'd 'em much,
When first Henrico met my wond'ring eyes.

Fer. Henrico is my friend, my best Constantia,
And thou hereafter shalt know all his virtues.

Syl. And shall I know him too?

Hen. Thou shalt; and I
Will live thy slave, if thou wilt deign to love me.

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Syl. Love you! I know not what you mean by love;
But if with pleasure to behold thee; if
To hang upon thy words; to mourn thy absence;
With joy to meet again, and feel my heart
Form new desires, and wish it knows not what;
If that be love, I do already love you.

Hen. Then am I bless'd indeed! Yes, thou shalt be—
My friend will smile consent—yes, thou, fair nymph,
Shalt be my bride.

Syl. Your bride! what's that?

Hen. My wife.

Syl. No, Sir, not that. I crave your pardon there.
To be left helpless on a desert island!

Const. Thy father did not leave me, Sylvia; no;
He could not prove deliberately false.
His heart was unsusceptable of fraud.
Anon you'll know it all.

Hen. Mean time, my fair,
Banish thy fears; and let me with this kiss,
On the white softness of this lovely hand,
For ever dedicate my heart.

Syl. Oh, Heav'ns!
What must I do, Mamma!

Const. Requite his love
With fair return of thine.

Syl. Must I do so?
The task appears not undelightful. Yes,
To thee I can resign myself. But tell me,
Wilt thou ne'er leave me; Wilt thou ever here
Fix thy abode?

Hen. No; we'll convey thee hence,
To the soft influence of a milder clime:

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There like a flow'r transplanted, thou shalt flourish
And ne'er regret this warmer southern sky,
But thrive and ripen, to the wond'ring world,
Unfolding all thy sweets to higher bloom.

Syl. What place is that? And whither will ye bear me?

Fer. To thy dear native soil; to England, love.

Syl To England!

Hen. Yes! the land of beauteous dames:
'Mongst whom thy matchless excellence shall shine
With undiminish'd radiance, and exert
Its gentle pow'r; by innocence endear'd,
By virtue heighten'd, and by modest truth
Attemper'd to such sweetness, that each fair,
With unrepining heart and glad consent,
Shall own thy rival claim; and ev'ry youth,
Touch'd by the graces of thy native beauty,
Shall join to make thy form the public care.

Syl. I cannot quit this island; cannot leave
These woods, these lawns, these hills and deep'ning vales,
These streams oft-visited, each well-known haunt,
Where hand in hand with innocence I've stray'd,
And tasted joys serene as is the air
That pants upon yon trembling leaves.

Fer. Such joys
For thee shall blossom in thy native land,
And new delights arise. There cultur'd fields
Wave with the golden harvest; commerce pours
Each delicacy forth; there stately domes
Attract the wond'ring eye; there cities swarm
With busy throngs intense, and smiles around

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A scene of active, cheerful, social life.
Thither I'll lead thee, sweet.
Syl. And yet my heart
Misgives me much. Does not contention there,
And civil discord, render life a scene
Of care, and toil, and struggle? Does not war
From foreign nations oft invade the land,
With all his train of misery and death?
Fer. Thy lovely fears are groundless. Ours, the land
Where inward peace diffuses smiles around,
And scatters wide her blessings: there a king,
(My friend comes later thence, and tells me all)
There reigns a happy, venerable king,
Dispensing justice and maintaining laws,
That bind alike his people and himself.
From that source liberty, and ev'ry claim
A free-born people boast, flow equal on,
And harmonize the state; while in the eve
And calm decline of life our monarch sees
A royal grandson still to higher lustre
Each day expanding; emulous to trace
His grandsire's steps, to copy out his actions;
And bid the ray of freedom onward stretch
To ages yet unborn.
Syl. And do the people
Know their own happiness?
Fer. They do, my sweet:
Pleas'd, they behold their native rights secur'd;
Their commerce guarded, and the useful arts,
That raise, that soften, and embellish life,
All to perfection rising. With a sense

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Of their own blessing touch'd, with one consent
They pour their treasures and exhaust their blood
In their king's righteous cause. Fair Albion thus
Raises her envied head; thus ev'ry threat
Of foreign force, each menace of invasion,
From a vain, vanquish'd, disappointed foe,
Like broken billows on her craggy cliffs,
Shall murmur at her feet in vain.

Syl. Methinks
I long to see this place.

Fer. My Sylvia, yes,
Thou shalt return: propitious gales invite.
Come, my Constantia.—Oh! what mix'd emotions
Heave in this bosom at the sight of thee?

Const. My heart runs o'er with ecstacy of joy,
And tears must speak my happiness. I long
To utter all my fond, fond thoughts! to tell
The story of my woes, and hear of thine;
While at each word our hearts shall melt within us,
And thrill with grief, with tenderness, and love.

Fer. The tale shall serve us in our future hours
Of tender intercourse, to sweeten pain,
To calm adversity, and teach our souls
To bend in love, in gratitude, and praise.
To the All-good on high, who thus befriends
The cause of innocence; who thus rewards
Our suff'ring constancy; whose hand, tho' slow,
Thus leads to rapture thro' a train of woe.

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Engraved by W. Ridley, from a Miniature, by M. Dighton.

Mr. LEWIS.

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Printed for T. Parsons, 21, Paternoster Row, June 1794.

MISS IN HER TEENS.

A F A R C E,

IN TWO ACTS.

WRITTEN BY DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES ROYAL DRURY LANE AND COVENT GARDEN.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,
FOR J. PARSONS, No 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1794.

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MISS IN HER TEENS.

TIME hath silvered over the heads of the few, who can remember GARRICK *and* WOODWARD *in the characters of* Fribble *and* Flash *in this excellent farce, which came from the pen of our English Roscius, and was first performed at Covent Garden Theatre; a year or two before the present century, now hastening towards its close, had attained its fifth stage.*

This very laughable production will ever retain its place among the list of acting pieces; as its satire is levelled against objects which have disgraced the circles of society in every age.

Lily's Male still remain to flutter around a lady's toilet, and descant on the properties of its various articles; Braggadocia huffers still infest our public places, to the annoyance of assemblies they have no pretensions to mix with, and from which they would be driven with contempt and punishment, were their real characters fairly developed.

To expose the worthless and assuming, and to caution the credulous and unsuspecting, is an employment honourable to genius; and those productions which favour an end so salutary to the welfare and safety of society, cannot be too often brought forward on the stage of Fancy, where, as in a glass, the world may view that of Life, if conducted upon those principles, which ought to be the study of every Manager, whether presiding over a Theatre Royal, or conducting the wooden train of a Puppet-shew.

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Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Captain Loveit,	-	Mr. Whitfield
Fribble,	-	Mr. R. Palmer
Flash,	-	Mr. Barrymore
Puff,	-	Mr. Suett
Jasper,	-	Mr. Phillimore.

Women.

Miss Biddy,	-	Miss De Camp
Tag,	-	Mrs. Edwards.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

Captain Loveit,	-	Mr. Macready
Fribble,	-	Mr. Bernerd
Flash,	-	Mr. Davies
Puff,	-	Mr. Powell
Jasper,	-	Mr. Thompson.

Women.

Miss Biddy,	-	Miss Gesit
Tag,	-	Miss Stuart.

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PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND.

TOO long has Farce, neglecting Nature's laws,
Debas'd the stage, and wrong'd the comic cause;
To raise a laugh has been her sole pretence,
Tho' dearly purchas'd at the price of sense.
This child of Folly gain'd increase with time;
Fit for the place, succeeded Pantomime;
Reviv'd her honours, join'd her motley band,
And Song and low Conceit o'er-ran the land.
More gen'rous views inform our author's breast;
From real life his characters are drest.
He seeks to trace the passions of mankind;
And while he spares the person, paints the mind.
In pleasing contrast he attempts to show
The vap'ring bully, and the fribbling beau:
Cowards alike; that, full of martial airs,
And this, as tender as the silks he wears.
Proud to divert, not anxious for renown,
Oft has the bard essay'd to please the Town.
Your full applause out-paid his little art:
He boasts no merit, but a grateful heart.
Pronounce your doom, he'll patiently submit,
Ye sovereign judges of all works of wit!

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To you the ore is brought, a lifeless mass;
You give the stamp, and then the coin may pass.
Now whether judgment prompt you to forgive,
Whether you bid this trifling offspring live,
Or with a frown should send the sickly thing
To sleep whole ages under Dulness' wing;
To your known candour we will always trust,
You never were, nor can you be, unjust.

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MISS IN HER TEENS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter Captain LOVEIT *and* PUFF.

Captain.

THIS is the place we were directed to; and now, Puff, if I can get no intelligence of her, what will become of me?

Puff. And me too, Sir—You must consider I am a marry'd man, and can't bear fatigue as I have done.—But pray, Sir, why did you leave the army so abruptly, and not give me time to fill my knapsack with common necessaries? Half a dozen shirts, and your regimentals, are my whole cargo.

Capt. I was wild to get away; and as soon as I obtained my leave of obsence, I thought every moment an age till I return'd to the place where I first saw this young, charming, innocent, bewitching creature.

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Puff. With fifteen thousand pounds for her fortune—strong motives, I must confess.———And now, Sir, as you are pleased to say you must depend upon my care and abilities in this affair, I think I have a just right to be acquainted with the particulars of your passion, that I may be the better enabled to serve you.

Capt. You shall have 'em.——'When I left the 'university, which is now seven months since, my 'father, who loves his money better than his son, 'and would not settle a farthing upon me—

'*Puff.* Mine did so by me, Sir——

'*Capt.* Purchas'd me a pair of colours at my own 'request; but before I join'd the regiment, which 'was going abroad, I took a ramble into the country 'with a fellow collegian, to see a relation of his who 'lived in Berkshire.——

'*Puff.* ——A party of pleasure, I suppose.

'*Capt.* During a short stay there, I came acquainted with this young creature: she was just come 'from the boarding-school; and tho' she had all the 'simplicity of her age, and the country, yet it was 'mix'd with such sensible vivacity, that I took fire 'at once.——

'*Puff.* I was tinder myself at your age. But 'pray, Sir, did you take fire before you knew of 'her fortune?

'*Capt.* Before, upon my honour.

'*Puff.* Folly and constitution—But on, Sir.'

Capt. I was intoduced to the family by the name of *Rhodophil* (for so my companion and I had settled

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it): at the end of three weeks I was obliged to attend the call of honour in Flanders; but——

'*Puff.* Your parting, to be sure, was heart-breaking.

'*Capt.* I feel it at this instant. We vow'd eternal constancy, and I promis'd to take the first opportunity of returning to her. I did so: but we found the house was shut up; and all the information, you know, that we could get from the neighbouring cottage was, that Miss and her aunt were remov'd to town, and liv'd somewhere near this part of it.

'*Puff.* And now we are got to the place of action, propose your plan of operation.'

Capt. My father lives in the next street, so I must decamp immediately for fear of discoveries: you are not known to be my servant; go make what inquiries you can in the neighbourhood, and I shall wait at the inn for your intelligence.

Puff. I'll patrol hereabouts, and examine all that pass; but I've forgot the word, Sir—Miss Biddy—

Capt. Bellair——

Puff. A young lady of wit, beauty, and fifteen thousand pounds fortune—But Sir—

Capt. What do you say, Puff?

Puff. If your honour pleases to consider that I had a wife in town whom I left somewhat abruptly half-a-year ago, you'll think it, I believe, but decent to make some inquiry after her first; to be sure, it would be some small consolation to me to know whether the poor woman is living, or has made away with herself, or——

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Capt. Prithee don't distract me; a moment's delay is of the utmost consequence; I must insist upon an immediate compliance with my commands.

[*Exit Captain.*

Puff. The devil's in these fiery young fellows, they think of nobody's wants but their own. He does not consider that I am flesh and blood as well as himself. However, I may kill two birds at once; for I shan't be surprized if I meet my lady walking the streets—But, who have we here? Sure I should know that face.

Enter JASPER *from a house.*

Who's that? my old acquaintance Jasper!

Jas. What, Puff! are you here?

Puff. My dear friend! [*kisses him.*] Well, and now Jasper, still easy and happy! *Toujours le meme!* What intrigues now? What girls have you ruin'd, and what cuckolds made, since you and I used to beat up together, eh?

Jas. Faith, business has been very brisk during the war; men are scarce, you know: not that I can say I ever wanted amusement in the worst of times—But hark ye, Puff——

Puff. Not a word aloud, I am incognito.

Jas. Why, faith, I should not have known you, if you had not spoke first; you seem to be a little dishabille too, as well as incognito. Whom do you honour with your service now? Are you from the wars?

Puff. Piping hot, I assure you; fire and smoke

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will tarnish: a man that will go into such service as I have been in, will find his cloaths the worse for the wear, take my word for it. But how is it with you, friend Jasper? What, you still serve, I see? you live at that house, I suppose?

Jas. I don't absolutely live, but I am most of my time there; I have, within these two month, entered into the service of an old gentleman, who hired a reputable servant, and dressed him as you see, because he has taken it into his head to fall in love.

Puff. False appetite, and second childhood! But, prithee, what's the object of his passion?

Jas. No less than a virgin of sixteen, I assure you.

Puff. Oh the toothless old dotard!

Jas. And he mumbles and plays with her till his mouth waters; then he chuckles till he cries, and calls her his Bid and his Bidsy; and is so foolishly fond——

Puff. Bidsy! what's that?—

Jas. —— Her name is Biddy.

Puff. Biddy! What, Miss Biddy Bellair?

Jas. ——The same—

Puff. I have no luck, to be sure. *(Aside.)*—Oh, I have heard of her; she's of a pretty good family, and has some fortune, I know. But are things settled? is the marriage fix'd?

Jas. Not absolutely; the girl, I believe, detests him; but her aunt, a very good prudent old lady, has given her consent, if he can gain her niece's:—how it will end, I can't tell—but I'm hot upon't myself.

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Puff.—The devil! not marriage, I hope?

Jas. That is not yet determined.

Puff. Who is the lady, pray?

Jas. A maid in the same family, a woman of honour, I assure you. She has one husband already, a scoundrel sort of a fellow, that has run away from her, and listed for a soldier; so, towards the end of the campaign, she hopes to have a certificate—he's knock'd o' th' head: if not, I suppose, we shall settle matters another way.

Puff. Well, speed the plough—But hark ye, consummate without the certificate if you can—keep your neck out of the collar—do—I have wore it these two years, and damnably gall'd I am—

Jas. I'll take your advice; but I must run away to my master, who will be impatient for an answer to his message, which I have just deliver'd to the young lady: so, dear Mr. Puff, I am your most obedient humble servant.

Puff. And I must to our agent's for my arrears: if you have an hour to spare, you'll hear of me at George's, or the Tilt-yard—*Au revoir*, as we say abroad. (*Exit Jasper.*) Thus we are as civil and as false as our betters: Jasper and I were always the beau monde exactly; we ever hated one another heartily, yet always kiss and shake hands—But now to my master with a headful of news, and a heartful of joy. [*Going, starts.*

Angels and ministers of grace defend me!
It can't be! By heav'ns, it is, that fretful porcupine, my wife! I can't stand it; what shall I do?—I'll try to avoid her.

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Enter TAG.

Tag. It must be he! I'll swear to the rogue at a mile's distance:—he either has not seen me, or won't know me. If I can keep my temper, I'll try him farther.

Puff. I sweat—I tremble—She comes upon me!

Tag. Pray, good Sir, if I may be so bold—

Puff. I have nothing for you, good woman; don't trouble me.

Tag. If your honour pleases to look this way—

Puff. The kingdom is over-run with beggars. I suppose the last I gave to has sent this: but I have no more loose silver about me; so, prithee, woman, don't disturb me.

Tag. I can hold no longer. Oh you villain, you! where have you been, scoundrel? Do you know me now, varlet? [*Seizes him.*

Puff. Here, watch, watch! Zounds, I shall have my pockets pick'd.

Tag. Own me this minute, hang-dog, and confess every thing; or, by the rage of an injured woman, I'll raise the neighbourhood, throttle you, and send you to Newgate.

Puff. Amazement! what, my own dear Tag!—Come to my arms, and let me press you to my heart, that pants for thee, and only thee, my true and lawful wife.—Now my stars have overpaid me for the fatigue and dangers of the field. I have wander'd about like Achilles in search of faithful Penelope; and the gods have brought me to this happy spot.

[*Embraces her.*

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Tag. The fellow's crackt for certain! Leave your bombastic stuff, and tell me, rascal, why you left me; and where you have been these six months, heh?

Puff. We'll reserve my adventures for our happy winter evenings—I shall only tell you now, that my heart beat so strong in my country's cause, and being instigated either by honour or the devil, (I can't tell which), I set out for Flanders to gather laurels, and lay 'em at thy feet.

Tag. You left me to starve, villain, and beg my bread, you did so.

Puff. I left you too hastily, I must confess; and often has my conscience stung me for it.—I am got into an officer's service; have been in several actions, gained some credit by my behaviour, and am now returned with my master to indulge the gentler passions.

Tag. Don't think to fob me off with this nonsensical talk. What have you brought me home besides?

Puff. Honour, and immoderate love.

Tag. I could tear your eyes out.

Puff. Temperance, or I walk off.

Tag. Temperance, traitor; temperance! What can you say for yourself: Leave me to the wide world.

Puff. Well, I have been in the world too, han't I? What would the woman have?

Tag. Reduce me to the necessity of going to service. [*Cries.*

Puff. Why, I'm in service too, your lord and master, an't I, you saucy jade you?——Come, where

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dost live, hereabout? Hast got good vails? Dost go to market? Come, give me a kiss, darling, and tell me where I shall pay my duty to thee.

Tag. Why, there I live; at that house.

[*Pointing to the house Jasper came out of.*

Puff. What! there! that house?

Tag. Yes, there; that house.

Puff. Huzza! We're made for ever, you slut you; huzza! Every thing conspires this day to make me happy.—Prepare for an inundation of joy! My master is in love with your Miss Biddy over head and ears, and she with him. I know she is courted by some old fumbler, and her aunt is not against the match; but now we are come, the town will be reliev'd, and the governor brought over: in plain English, our fortune is made; my master must marry the lady, and the old gentleman may go to the devil.

Tag. Heyday! what's all this?

Puff. Say no more; the dice are thrown doublets for us: away to your young mistress, while I run to my master. Tell her Rhodophil, Rhodophil will be with her immediately; then if her blood does not mount to her face like quicksilver in a weather-glass, and point to extreme hot, believe the whole a lie, and your husband no politician.

Tag. This is news indeed! I have had the place but a little while, and have not quite got into the secrets of the family: but part of your story is true; and if you bring your master, and Miss is willing, I warrant we'll be too hard for the old folks.

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Puff. I'll about it straight.——But hold, Tag, I had forgot——Pray, how does Mr. Jasper do?

Tag. Mr. Jasper!—What do you mean? I—I—I—

Puff. What! out of countenance, child? O fie! speak plain my dear——And the certificate; when comes that, heh, love?

Tag. He has sold himself and turn'd conjuror, or he could never have known it. *Aside.*

Puff. Are not you a jade?—are not you a Jezebel?—arn't you a——

Tag. O ho, temperance, or I walk off.—

Puff. I know I am not finish'd yet, and so I am easy! but more thanks to my fortune than your virtue, madam.

Bid. (within.) Tag, Tag! where are you, Tag?

Tag. Coming, Madam——My lady calls—away to your master, and I'll prepare his reception within.

Puff. Shall I bring the certificate with me? [*Exit.*

Tag. Go you graceless rogue, you richly deserve it. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *changes to a chamber.*

Enter AUNT *and* TAG.

Aunt. Who was that man you were talking to, Tag?

Tag. A cousin of mine, Madam, that brought me some news from my aunt in the country.

Aunt. Where's my niece? Why are you not with her?

Tag. She bid me leave her alone.—She's so me-

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' lancholy, Madam, I don't know what's come to her ' of late———

' *Aunt.* The thoughtfulness that is natural upon ' the approach of matrimony, generally occasions a ' decent concern.

' *Tag.* And do you think, Madam, a husband of ' three-score and five———

' *Aunt.* Hold, Tag, he protests to me he is but ' five and fifty.

' *Tag.* He is a rogue, Madam; and an old rogue, ' which is the worst of rogues.—

' *Aunt.* Alas, youth, or age, 'tis all one to her: ' she is all simplicity, without experience. I would ' not force her inclinations; but she's so innocent ' she won't know the difference——

' *Tag.* Innocent! ne'er trust to that, Madam. I ' was innocent myself once; but *live* and *learn* is an ' old saying, and a true one.—I believe, Madam, ' nobody is more innocent than yourself, and a good ' maid you are to be sure; but though you *really* ' don't know the difference, yet you can *fancy it*, I ' warrant you.

' *Aunt.* I should prefer a large jointure to a small ' one, and that's all; but 'tis impossible that Biddy ' should have desires; she's but newly come out of ' the country, and just turn'd of sixteen.

' *Tag:* That's a ticklish age, Madam. I have ' observ'd she does not eat, nor she does not sleep; ' she sighs and she cries, and she loves moonlight: ' these, I take it, are very strong symptoms.

' *Aunt.* They are very unaccountable, I must con-

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'fess; but you talk from a depraved mind, Tag; 'hers is simple and untainted.

'*Tag.* She'll make him a cuckold though for all 'that, if you force her to marry him.

'*Aunt.* You shock me, Tag, with your coarse ex-'pressions. I tell you, her chastity will be her 'guard, let her husband be what he will.

'*Tag.* Chastity! never trust to that, Madam: 'get her a husband that's fit for her, and I'll be 'bound for her virtue; but with such a one as Sir 'Simon, I'm a rogue if I'd answer for my own.

'*Aunt.* Well, Tag, the child shall never have 'reason to repent of my severity. I was going be-'fore to my lawyer's to speak about the articles of 'marriage; I will now put a stop to 'em for some 'time, till we can make farther discoveries.

'*Tag.* Heav'n will bless you for your goodness.—'Look where the poor bird comes, quite mop'd and 'melancholy. I'll set my pump to work, and draw 'something from her before your return, I warrant 'you. (*Exit Aunt.*) There goes a miracle: she has 'neither pride, envy, or ill-nature; and yet is near 'sixty, and a virgin.'

Enter BIDDY.

Bid. How unfortunate a poor girl am I! dare not tell my secret to any body; and if I don't, I'm undone—Heigh ho! (*Sighs.*) 'Pray, Tag, is my aunt 'gone to her lawyer about me?—Heigh ho!'

Tag. What's that sigh for, my dear young mistress?

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Bid. I did not sigh, not I—— [*Sighs.*

Tag. Nay, never gulp 'em down; they are the worst things you can swallow. There's something in that little heart of yours, that swells it, and puffs it, and will burst it at last, if you don't give it vent.

Bid. What would you have me tell you? [*Sighs.*

Tag. Come, come, you are afraid I'll betray you: but you had as good speak; I may do you some service you little think of.

Bid. It is not in your power, Tag, to give me what I want. [*Sighs.*

Tag. Not directly perhaps; but I may be the means of helping you to it. As, for example—if you should not like to marry the old man your aunt designs for you, one may find a way to break——

Bid. His neck, Tag?

Tag. Or the match; either will do, child.

Bid. I don't care which indeed, so I was clear of him——I don't think I'm fit to be marry'd.

Tag. To him you mean—You have no objection to marriage, but the man; and I applaud you for it. But come, courage, Miss; never keep it in; out with it all.

Bid. If you'll ask me any questions, I'll answer 'em; but I can't tell you any thing of myself; I shall blush if I do.

Tag. Well, then—in the first place, pray tell me, Miss Biddy Bellair, if you don't like somebody better than old Sir Simon Loveit?

Bid. Heigh ho!

Tag. What's heigh ho, Miss?

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Bid. When I say heigh ho, it means yes.

Tag. Very well: and this somebody is a young handsome fellow?

Bid. Heigh ho!

Tag. And if you were once his, you'd be as merry as the best of us?

Bid. Heigh ho!

Tag. So far so good! and since I have got you to wet your feet, souse over head at once, and the pain will be over.

Bid. There—then (*A long sigh.*) Now help me out, Tag, as fast as you can.

Tag. When did you hear from your gallant?

Bid. Never since he went to the army.

Tag. How so?

Bid. I was afraid the letters would fall into my aunt's hands, so I would not let him write to me: but I had a better reason then.

Tag. Pray let's hear that too.

Bid. Why, I thought if I should write to him, and promise him to love nobody else, and should afterwards change my mind, he might think I was inconstant, and call me a coquette.

Tag. What a simple innocent it is! (*Aside.*) And have you chang'd your mind, Miss?

Bid. No indeed, Tag; I love him the best of any of 'em.

Tag. Of any of 'em! Why, have you any more?

Bid. Pray, don't ask me.

Tag. Nay, Miss, if you only trust me by halves, you can't expect——

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Bid. I will trust you with every thing.—When I parted with him, I grew melancholy; so, in order to divert me, I have let two others court me till he return again.

Tag. Is that all, my dear? Mighty simple, indeed! [*Aside.*

Bid. One of 'em is a fine blust'ring man, and so call'd Captain *Flash*; he's always talking of fighting and wars: he thinks he's sure of me; but I shall baulk him: we shall see him this afternoon, for he press'd strongly to come; and I have given him leave, while my aunt's taking her afternoon's nap.

Tag. And who is the other, pray?

Bid. Quite another sort of a man. He speaks like a lady for all the world, and never swears as Mr. Flash does, but wears nice white gloves, and tells me what ribbons become my complexion, where to stick my patches, who is the best milliner, where they sell the best tea, and which is the best wash for the face, and the best paste for the hands; he is always playing with my fan, and showing his teeth; and whenever I speak, he pats me—so—and cries, The devil take me, Miss Biddy, but you'll be my perdition, ha, ha, ha!

Tag. Oh the pretty creature! And what do you call him, pray?

Bid. His name's *Fribble:* you shall see him too; for by mistake I appointed 'em at the same time: but you must help me out with 'em.

Tag. And suppose your favourite should come too—

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Bid. I should not care what become of the others.

Tag. What's his name?

Bid. It begins with an R—h—o——

Tag. I'll be hang'd if it is not Rhodophil.

Bid. I am frighten'd at you! You're a witch, Tag.

Tag. I am so; and I can tell your fortune too. Look me in the face. The gentleman you love most in the world, will be at our house this afternoon:—he arrived from the army this morning, and dies till he sees you.

Bid. Is he come Tag? Don't joke with me.

Tag. Not to keep you longer in suspence, you must know, the servant of your Strephon, by some unaccountable fate or other, is my lord and master: he has just been with me, told me of his master's arrival and impatience——

Bid. Oh, my dear, dear Tag, you have put me out of my wits—I am all over in a flutter.—I shall leap out of my skin—I don't know what to do with myself.—Is he come, Tag?——I am ready to faint—I'd give the world I had put on my pink and silver robings to-day.

Tag. I assure you, Miss, you look charmingly.

Bid. Do I indeed though? I'll put a little patch under my left eye, and powder my hair immediately.

Tag. We'll go to-dinner first, and then I'll assist you.

Bid. Dinner! I can't eat a morsel——I don't know what's the matter with me——my ears tingle, my heart beats, my face flushes, and I tremble every

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joint of me.——I must run in and look at myself in the glass this moment.

Tag. Yes she has it, and deeply too: 'This is no 'hypocrisy——

'Not art, but Nature, now, performs her part,
'And ev'ry word's the language of the heart.'

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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ACT II.

Scene continues.

Enter Captain LOVEIT, BIDDY, TAG, *and* PUFF.

Captain Loveit.

TO find you still constant, and to arrive at such a critical juncture, is the height of fortune and happiness.

Bid. Nothing shall force me from you;—and if I am secure of your affections——

Puff. I'll be bound for him, Madam, and give you any security you can ask.

Tag. Every thing goes on to our wish, Sir.—I just now had a second conference with my old lady; and she was so convinc'd by my arguments, that she return'd instantly to the lawyer to forbid the drawing out of any writings at all; and she is determin'd never to thwart Miss's inclinations, and left it to us to give the old gentleman his discharge at the next visit.

Capt. Shall I undertake the old dragon?

Tag. If we have occasion for help, we shall call for you.

Bid. I expect him every moment?—therefore I'll tell you what, Rodophil, you and your man shall be lock'd up in my bed-chamber till we have settled matters with the old gentleman.

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Capt. Do what you please with me.

Bid. You must not be impatient though.

Capt. I can undergo any thing with such a reward in view. One kiss, and I'll be quite resign'd —And now show me the way. [*Exeunt.*

Tag. Come, sirrah, when I have got you under lock and key, I shall bring you to reason.

Puff. Are your wedding-cloaths ready, my dove? —The certificate's come.

Tag. Go follow your captain, sirrah—march— You may thank Heav'n I had patience to stay so long. [*Exeunt Tag and Puff.*

Re-enter BIDDY.

Bid. I was very much alarm'd for fear my two gallants should come in upon us unawares; we should have had sad work if they had.——I find I love Rhodophil vastly; for though my other sparks flatter me more, I can't abide the thoughts of 'em now——I have business upon my hands enough to turn my little head——but, egad, my heart's good, and a fig for dangers.——Let me see—what shall I do with my two gallants? I must at least part with 'em decently. Suppose I set 'em together by the ears?—The luckiest thought in the world:——For if they won't quarrel (as I believe they won't), I can break with them for cowards, and very justly dismiss 'em my service: and if they will fight, and one of 'em should be killed, the other will certainly be hang'd or run away;—and so I shall very hand-

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somely get rid of both.—I am glad I have settled it so purely.

Enter TAG.

Well, Tag, are they safe?

Tag. I think so——the door's double lock'd, and I have the key in my pocket.

Bid. That's pure; but have you given them any thing to divert 'em?

Tag. I have given the Captain one of your old gloves to mumble; but my Strephon is diverting himself with the more substantial comforts of a cold venison pasty.

Bid. What shall we do with the next that comes?

Tag. If Mr. Fribble comes first, I'll clap him up into my lady's store-room. I suppose he is a great maker of marmalade himself, and will have an opportunity of making some critical remarks upon our pastry and sweetmeats.

Bid. When one of 'em comes, do you go and watch for the other; and as soon as you see him run in to us, and pretend it is my aunt, and so we shall have an excuse to lock him up till we want him.

Tag. You may depend upon me——Here is one of 'em.

Enter FRIBBLE.

Bid. Mr. Fribble, your servant—

Frib. Miss Biddy, your slave——I hope I have not come upon you abruptly.——I should have

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waited upon you sooner; but an accident happen'd that discomposed me so, that I was oblig'd to go home again to take drops.

Bid. Indeed you don't look well, Sir—Go, Tag, and do as I bid you.

Tag. I will, Madam. [*Exit.*

Bid. I have set my maid to watch my aunt, that we mayn't be surprised by her.

Frib. Your prudence is equal to your beauty, Miss; and I hope your permitting me to kiss your hands, will be no impeachment to your understanding.

Bid. I hate the sight of him. *(Aside.)* I was afraid I should not have had the pleasure of seeing you. Pray, let me know what accident you met with, and what's the matter with your hand?——I shan't be easy till I know.

Frib. Well, I vow, Miss Biddy, you're a good *creeter*—I'll endeavour to muster up what little spirits I have, and tell you the whole affair.——Hem! ——But first, you must give me leave to make you a present of a small pot of my lip-salve. My servant made it this morning: the ingredients are innocent, I assure you; nothing but the best virgin wax, conserve of roses, and lily-of-the-valley water.

Bid. I thank you, Sir, but my lips are generally red; and when they an't, I bite 'em.

Frib. I bite my own sometimes, to pout 'em a little; but this will give them a softness, colour, and

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an agreeable *moister*.—Thus let me make an humble offering at that shrine, where I have already sacrificed my heart. [*Kneels, and gives the pot.*

Bid. Upon my word, that's very prettily express'd; you are positively the best company in the world——I wish he was out of the house. [*Aside.*

Frib. But to return to my accident, and the reason why my hand is in this condition—I beg you'll excuse the appearance of it, and be satisfy'd, that nothing but mere necessity could have forc'd me to appear thus muffled before you.

Bid. I am very willing to excuse any misfortune that happens to you, Sir. [*Curtsies.*

Frib. You are vastly good, indeed——Thus it was—Hem!—You must know, Miss, there is not an animal in the creation I have so great an aversion to, as those hackney-coach fellows——As I was coming out of my lodgings,—says one of 'em to me, Would your honour have a coach?——No, man, said I, not now, (with all the civility imaginable.) ——I'll carry you and your Doll too, said he, Miss Margery, for the same price—Upon which the masculine beasts about us fell a-laughing. Then I turn'd round in a great passion—Curse me, says I, fellow, but I'll trounce thee.——And as I was holding out my hand in a threatening *poster*—thus—he makes a cut at me with his whip, and striking me over the nail of my little finger, it gave me such exquisite *torter*, that I fainted away—and while I was in this condition, the mob pick'd my pocket

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of my purse, my scissars, my Mocco smelling bottle, and my husswife.

Bid. I shall laugh in his face. *(Aside.)* I am afraid you are in great pain. Pray sit down, Mr. Fribble: but I hope your hand is in no danger?

[*They sit.*

Frib. Not in the least, Ma'am; pray, don't be apprehensive.—A milk-poultice, and a gentle sweat to-night, with a little manna in the morning, I am confident will relieve me entirely.

Bid. But, pray, Mr. Fribble, do you make use of a husswife.

Frib. I can't do without it, Ma'am: there is a club of us, all young bachelors, the sweetest society in the world; and we meet three times a week at each other's lodgings, where we drink tea, hear the chat of the day, invent fashions for the ladies, make models of 'em, and cut out patterns in paper. We were the first inventors of knotting; and this fringe is the original produce and joint labour of our little community.

Bid. And who are your pretty set, pray?

Frib. There's Phil. Whiffle, Jacky Wagtail, my lord Trip, Billy Dimple, Sir Dilberry Diddle, and your humble——

Bid. What a sweet collection of happy creatures!

Frib. Indeed and so we are, Miss——But a prodigious fracas disconcerted us some time ago at Billy Dimple's——three drunken naughty women of the town burst into our club-room, curs'd us all, threw down the china, broke six looking-glasses,

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scalded us with the slop-bason, and scratch'd poor Phil. Whiffle's cheek in such a manner, that he has kept his bed these three weeks.

Bid. Indeed, Mr. Fribble, I think all our sex have great reason to be angry; for if you are so happy now you are batchelors, the ladies may wish and sigh to very little purpose.

Frib. You are mistaken, I assure you; I am prodigiously rallied about my passion for you, I can tell you that, and am looked upon as lost to our society already. He, he, he!

Bid. Pray, Mr. Fribble, now you have gone so far, don't think me impudent if I long to know how you intend to use the lady who has been honour'd with your affections?

Frib. Not as most other wives are used, I assure you: all the domestic business will be taken off her hands; I shall make the tea, comb the dogs, and dress the children myself; so that, tho' I'm a commoner, Mrs. Fribble will lead the life of a woman of quality; for she will have nothing to do but lie in bed, play at cards, and scold the servants.

Bid. What a happy creature she must be!

Frib. Do you really think so? Then, pray, let me have a little *serous* talk with you——Tho' my passion is not of long standing, I hope the sincerity of intentions——

Bid. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. Go you wild thing, (*Pats her.*) The devil take me but there is no talking to you—How can you use me in this barbarous manner! if I had the con-

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stitution of an alderman, it would sink under my sufferings——*koomam nater* can't support it.

Bid. Why, what would you do with me, Mr. Fribble?

Frib. Well, I vow I'll beat you if you talk so—— Don't look at me in that manner—Flesh and blood can't bear it—I could—but I won't grow indecent—

Bid. But pray Sir, where are the verses you were to write upon me? I find, if a young lady depends too much upon such fine gentlemen as you, she'll certainly be disappointed.

Frib. I vow, the flutter I was put into this afternoon has quite turn'd my senses———here they are, tho'———and I believe you'll like 'em.

Bid. There can be no doubt of it. [*Curtsies.*

Frib. I protest, Miss, I don't like that curtsy—Look at me, and always rise in this manner. (*Shows her.*) But, my dear *creeter*, who put on your cap today? They have made a fright of you, and it is as yellow as old lady Crowfoot's neck.——When we are settled, I'll dress your head myself.

Bid. Pray read the verses to me Mr. Fribble,

Frib. I obey——Hem!———William Fribble, Esq. to Miss Biddy Bellair——greeting.

No ice so hard, so cold as I,
'Till warm'd and soften'd by your eye;
And now my heart dissolves away
In dreams by night, in sighs by day.
No brutal passion fires my breast,
Which loaths the object when possess'd;
But one of harmless, gentle kind,
Whose joys are center'd—in the mind.

Then take with me love's better part,
His downy wing, but not his dart.

How do you like 'em?

Bid. Ha, ha, ha! I swear they are very pretty—but I don't quite understand 'em.

Frib. These light pieces are never so well understood in reading as singing; I have set 'em myself, and will endeavour to give 'em you: *La—la*—I have an abominable cold, and can't sing a note; however, the tune's nothing, the manner's all.

No ice so hard, &c. *(Sings.)*

Enter TAG, *running.*

Tag. Oh, Madam, Madam!

Frib. What's the matter?

Tag. Your a unt, your aunt, your aunt, Madam!

Bid. Oh! for heav'n's sake hide Mr. Fribble, or we are ruin'd. Put him into the store-room this moment.

Frib. Is it a damp place, Mrs. Tag? The floor is boarded, I hope?

Tag. Indeed it is not, Sir.

Frib. What shall I do? I shall certainly catch my death! Where's my cambrick handkerchief, and my salts? I shall certainly have my hysterickes!

[*Runs in with Tag.*

Bid. In, in, in——So now let the other come as soon as he will; I did not care if I had twenty of 'em, so they would but come one after another.

Re-enter TAG.

Was my aunt coming?

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'*Tag.* No, 'twas Mr. Flash, I suppose by the 'length of his stride, and the cock of his hat. He'll 'be here this minute———What shall we do with 'him?

'*Bid.* I'll manage him, I warrant you, and try his 'courage; be sure you are ready to second me—we 'shall have pure sport.

'*Tag.* Hush! here he comes.'

Enter FLASH *singing.*

Flash. Well, my blossom, here am I! What hopes for a poor dog, eh?—How! the maid here? then I've lost the town, demmee! Not a shilling to bribe the governor; she'll spring a mine, and I shall be blown to the devil.

Bid. Don't be asham'd, Mr. Flash: I have told Tag the whole affair; and she's my friend, I can assure you.

Flash. Is she? then she won't be mine I am certain. *(Aside.)* Well, Mrs. Tag, you know, I suppose, what is to be done: this young lady and I have contracted ourselves; and so, if you please to stand bride-maid, why we'll fix the wedding-day directly.

Tag. The wedding-day, Sir?

Flash. The wedding-day, Sir! Ay, Sir! the wedding day, Sir! What have you to say to that, Sir?

Bid. My dear Captain Flash, don't make such a noise, you'll wake my aunt.

Flash. And suppose I did, child, what then?

Bid. She'd be frighten'd out of her wits.

Flash. At me, Miss? frighten'd at me? *Tout au contraire,* I assure you: you mistake the thing,

child: I have some reason to believe I am not quite so shocking. [*Affectedly.*

Tag. Indeed, Sir, you flatter yourself——But pray, Sir, what are your pretensions?

Flash. The lady's promises, my own passion, and the best-mounted blade in the three kingdoms. If any man can produce a better title, let him take her; if not, the devil mince me if I give up an atom of her.

Bid. He's in a fine passion if he would but hold it.

Tag. Pray, Sir, hear reason a little.

Flash. I never do, Madam; it is not my method of proceeding? here is my logic! (*Draws his sword.*) Sa, sa—my best argument is cart-over-arm, Madam, ha, ha, (*lounges*); and if he answers that, Madam, through my small guts, my breath, blood, and mistress, are all at his service——nothing more, Madam.

Bid. This'll do, this'll do.

Tag. But, Sir, Sir, Sir!

Flash. But, Madam, Madam, Madam! I profess blood, Madam, I was bred up to it from a child; I study the book of fate, and the camp is my university; I have attended the lectures of Prince Charles upon the Rhine, and Bathiani upon the Po, and have extracted knowledge from the mouth of a cannon: I'm not to be frighten'd with squibs, Madam; no, no.

Bid. Pray, dear Sir, don't mind her, but let me psevail with you to go away this time.—Your passion is very fine, to be sure; and when my aunt and Tag are gone out of the way, I'll let you know when I'd have you come again.

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Flash. When you'd have me come again, child! And suppose I never would come again, what do you think of that now, ha? You pretend to be afraid of your aunt; your aunt knows what's what too well to refuse a good match when 'tis offer'd——Lookee, Miss, I'm a man of honour; glory is my aim; I have told you the road I am in; and do you see here, child, *(showing his sword,)* no tricks upon travellers.

Bid. But pray, Sir, hear me.

Flash. No, no, no; I know the world, Madam: I am as well known at Covent-garden as the Dial, Madam: I'll break a lamp, bully a constable, bam a justice, or bilk a box-keeper, with any man in the liberties of Westminster: What do you think of me now, Madam?

Bid. Pray don't be so furious, Sir.

Flash. Come, come, come, few words are best; somebody's happier than somebody, and I am a poor silly fellow, ha, ha——that's all—Look you, child, to be short, (for I'm a man of reflection), I have but a bagatelle to say to you. I am in love with you up to hell and desperation, may the sky crush me if I am not!——But since there is another more fortunate than I, adieu, Biddy! Prosperity to the happy rival, patience to poor Flash; but the first time we meet—gunpowder be my perdition, but I'll have the honour to cut a throat with him. [*Going.*

Bid. (stopping him.) You may meet with him now, if you please.

Flash. Now! may I?——Where is he? I'll sacrifice the villain. [*Aloud.*

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Tag. Hush! he's but in the next room.

Flash. Is he? Ram me *(low)* into a mortar-piece but I'll have vengeance; my blood boils to be at him. —Don't be frighten'd, Miss!

Bid. No, Sir; I never was better pleas'd, I assure you.

Flash. I shall soon do his business.

Bid. As soon as you please; take your own time.

Tag. I'll fetch the gentleman to you immediately. [*Going.*

Flash. (stopping her.) Stay, stay a little; what a passion I am in!—Are you sure he is in the next room?—I shall certainly tear him to pieces——I would fain murder him like a gentleman too—Besides, this family shan't be brought into trouble upon my account—I have it—I'll watch for him in the street, and mix his blood with the puddle of the next kennel. [*Going.*

Bid. (stopping him.) No, pray, Mr. Flash, let me see the battle; I shall be glad to see you fight for me; you shan't go, indeed. [*Holding him.*

Tag. (holding him.) Oh, pray, let me see you fight: there were two gentlemen *fit* yesterday, and my mistress was never so diverted in her life.—I'll fetch him out. [*Exit.*

Bid. Do, stick him, stick him, Captain Flash, I shall love the better for it.

Flash. Damn your love; I wish I was out of the house. [*Aside.*

Bid. Here he is——Now, speak some of your hard words, and run him through——

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Flash. Don't be in fits now—— [*Aside to Biddy.*

Bid. Never fear me.

Enter TAG *and* FRIBBLE.

Tag. (*to Fribble.*) Take it on my word, Sir, he is a bully, and nothing else.

Frib. (*frighten'd.*) I know you are my good friend; but perhaps you don't know his disposition.

Tag. I am confident he is a coward.

Frib. D'ye think so, Mrs. Tag?

Tag. Oh, I am sure of it.

Frib. Is he? Nay, then I'm his man.

Flash. I like his looks, but I'll not venture too far at first.

Tag. Speak to him, Sir.

Frib. I will—I understand, Sir—hem—that you—by Mrs. Tag here—Sir—who has inform'd me—hem—that you would be glad to speak with me—demmee— [*Turns off.*

Flash. I can speak to you, Sir—or to any body, Sir—or I can let it alone and hold my tongue—if I see occasion, Sir, damme— [*Turns off.*

Bid. Well said, Mr. Flash; be in a passion.

Tag. (*to Fribble.*) Don't mind his looks, he changes colour already; to him, to him. [*Pushes him.*

Frib. Don't hurry me, Mrs. Tag, for heaven's sake: I shall be out of breath before I begin, if you do—Sir—(*to Flash.*) If you can't speak to a gentleman in another manner, Sir—why then I'll venture to say, you had better hold your tongue—oons.

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Flash. Sir, you and I are of different opinions.

Frib. You and your opinions may go to the devil —take that. [*Turns off to Tag.*

Tag. Well said, Sir, the day's your own.

Bid. What's the matter, Mr. Flash? Is all your fury gone? Do you give me up?

Frib. I have done his business. [*Struts about.*

Flash. Give you up, Madam! No, Madam, when I am determin'd in my resolutions, I am always calm; 'tis our way, Madam: and now I shall proceed to business——Sir, I beg to say a word to you in private.

Frib. Keep your distance, fellow, and I'll answer you.——That lady has confess'd a passion for me; and as she has deliver'd up her heart into my keeping, nothing but my *'art's* blood shall purchase it. Damnation!

Tag. Bravo! bravo!

Flash. If those are the conditions, I'll give you earnest for it directly. *(Draws.)* Now, villain, renounce all right and title this minute, or the torrent of my rage will overflow my reason, and I shall annihilate the nothingness of your soul and body in an instant.

Frib. I wish there was a constable at hand to take us both up; we shall certainly do one another a prejudice.

Tag. No, you won't indeed, Sir; pray, bear up to him; if you wou'd but draw your sword, and be in a passion, he would run away directly.

Frib. Will he? *(Draws his sword.)* Then I can no

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longer contain myself—Hell and the furies! Come on, thou savage brute!

Tag. Go on, Sir.

[*Here they stand in fighting postures, while Biddy and Tag push them forward.*

Flash. Come on, Sir.

Bid. Go on.

Frib. Come on, rascal.

Tag. Go on, Sir.

Enter Captain LOVEIT *and* PUFF.

Capt. What's the matter, my dear?

Bid. If you won't fight, here's one that will. 'Oh Rhodophil, these two sparks are your rivals, 'and have pester'd me these two months with their 'addresses; they forced themselves into the house, 'and have been quarrelling about me, and disturb-'ing the family; if they won't fight, pray kick 'em 'out of the house.'

Capt. What's the matter, gentlemen?

[*They both keep their fencing posture.*

Flash. Don't part us, Sir.

Frib. No, pray Sir, don't part us; we shall do you a mischief.

Capt. Puff, look to the other gentleman, and call a surgeon.

Bid. and *Tag.* Ha, ha, ha!

Puff. Bless me! how can you stand under your wounds, Sir?

Frib. Am I hurt, Sir?

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Puff. Hurt, Sir! why, you have—let me see—pray stand in the light—one, two, three, thro' the heart? and, let me see—hum—eight thro' the small guts! Come, Sir, make it up the round dozen, and then we'll part you.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Capt. Come here, Puff.

[*Whispers, and looks at Flash.*

Puff. 'Tis the very same, Sir.

Capt. (*to Flash.*) Pray, Sir, have I not had the pleasure of seeing you abroad?

Flash. I have serv'd abroad.

Capt. Had not you the misfortune, Sir, to be missing at the last engagement in Flanders?

Flash. I was found amongst the dead in the field of battle.

Puff. He was the first that fell, Sir;—the wind of a cannon-ball struck him flat upon his face: he had just strength enough to creep into a ditch, and there he was found after the battle in a most deplorable condition.

Capt. Pray, Sir, what advancement did you get by the service of that day?

Flash. My wounds rendered me unfit for service, and I sold out.

Puff. Stole out, you mean——We hunted him by scent to the water-side;—thence he took shipping for England; and taking the advantage of my master's absence, has attacked the citadel; which we are luckily come to relieve—and drive his honour into the ditch again.

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All. Ha, ha, ha!

Frib. He, he, he!

Capt. And now, Sir, how have you dar'd to show your face in open day, or wear even the outside of a profession you have so much scandalized by your behaviour?——I honour the name of soldier; and, as a party concerned, am bound not to see it disgrac'd. As you have forfeited your title to honour, deliver up your sword this instant.

Flash. Nay, good Captain—

Capt. No words, Sir. [*Takes his sword.*

Frib. He's a sad scoundrel;—I wish I had kick'd him.

Capt. The next thing I command—Leave this house, change the colour of your cloaths and fierceness of your looks;——appear from top to toe the wretch, the very wretch thou art:——If e'er I meet thee in the military dress again, or if you put on looks that belie the native baseness of thy heart, be it where it will, this shall be the reward of thy impudence and disobedience. [*Kicks him; he runs off.*

'*Bid.* Oh, my dear Rodophil!'

Frib. What an infamous rascal it is!—I thank you, Sir, for this favour; but I must after and cane him.

[*Going, is stopt by the Captain.*

Capt. One word with you too, Sir.

Frib. With me, Sir!

Capt. You need not tremble;——I shan't use you roughly.

Frib. I am certain of that, Sir;—but I am sadly troubled with weak nerves.

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Capt. Thou art of a species too despicable for correction; therefore be gone; and if I see you here again, your insignificancy shan't protect you.

Frib. I am obliged to you for your kindness.—Well, if ever I have any thing to do with intrigues again——Miss Biddy, your servant—Captain, your servant—Mrs. Tag, yours—Old soldier, yours.

Puff. Boh!—(*in Fribble's face as he is going out.*)

Frib. O Lard! [*Exit.*

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Puff. Shall I ease you of your trophy, Sir?

Capt. Take it, Puff, as a small recompence for thy fidelity; thou can'st better use it than its owner.

Puff. I wish your Honour had a patent to take such trifles from every pretty gentleman that could spare 'em. I would set up the largest cutler's shop in the kingdom.

Capt. Well said, Puff.

'*Bid.* But pray, Mr. Fox, how did you get out 'of your hole? I thought you was lock'd in.

'*Capt.* I shot the bolt back when I heard a noise '—and thinking you was in danger, I broke my 'confinement without any other consideration than 'your safety. [*Kisses her hand.*

'*Sir Sim.* (*without.*) Biddy, Biddy!—Why, Tag, Tag!

'*Bid.* There's the old gentleman; run in, run in. [*Exeunt Capt. and Puff. Tag opens the door.*

'*Enter Sir* SIMON *and* JASPER.

'*Sir Sim.* Where have you been, Biddy?—Jas-

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'per and I have knock'd and call'd as loud and as
'long as we were able. What were you doing,
'child?

'*Bid.* I was reading part of a play to Tag, and
'we came as soon as we heard you.

'*Sir Sim.* What play, Moppet?

'*Tag.* The old Bachelor; and we were just got
'to old Nykyn as you knock'd at the door.

'*Sir Sim.* I must have you burn your plays and
'romances, now you are mine—they corrupt your
'innocence; and what can you learn from 'em?

'*Bid.* What you can't teach me, I am sure.

'*Sir Sim.* Fy, fy, child, I never heard you talk at
'this rate before. I'm afraid, Tag, you put these
'things into her head.

'*Tag.* I, Sir!—I vow, Sir Simon, she knows
'more than you can conceive. She surprises me,
'I assure you, though I have been married these
'two years, and liv'd with batchelors most part of
'my life.

'*Sir Sim.* Do you hear, Jasper?—I'm all over in
'a sweat.——Pray, Miss, have you not had com-
'pany this afternoon? I saw a young fop go out of
'the house as I was coming hither.

'*Bid.* You might have seen two, Sir Simon, if
'your eyes had been good.

'*Sir Sim.* Do you hear, Jasper?——Sure the
'child is possess'd—Pray, Miss, what do they want
'here?

'*Bid.* Me, Sir; they wanted me.

'*Sir Sim.* What did they want with you, I say?

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'*Bid.* Why, what do you want with me?

'*Sir Sim.* Do you hear, Jasper?—I am thunder-
'struck!—I can't believe my own ears——Tell me
'the reason, I say, why——

'*Tag.* I'll tell you the reason why, if you please,
'Sir Simon. Miss, you know, is a very silly young
'girl; and having found out (Heaven knows how!)
'that there is some little difference beween sixty-
'five and twenty-five, she's ridiculous enough
'to choose the latter; when, if she'd take my ad-
'vice——

'*Sir Sim.* You are right, Tag, she would take
'me—eh!——

'*Tag.* Yes, Sir, as the only way to have both;
'for if she marries you, the other will follow of
'course.

'*Sir Sim.* Do you hear, Jasper?

'*Bid.* 'Tis very true, Sir Simon: from knowing no
'better, I have set my heart upon a young man;
'and a young one I'll have. There has been three
'here this afternoon.

'*Sir Sim.* Three, Jasper!

'*Bid.* And they have been quarrelling about me,
'and one has beat the other two. Now, Sir Simon,
'if you'll take up the conqueror, and kick him, as
'he has kick'd the others, you shall have me for
'your reward, and my fifteen thousand pounds into
'the bargain. What says my hero, eh?

[*Slaps him on the back.*

'*Sir Sim.* The world's at an end——What's to
'be done, Jasper?

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'*Jas.* Pack up and be gone. Don't fight the 'match, Sir.

'*Sir Sim.* Flesh and blood can't bear it—I'm all 'over agitation—Hugh, hugh!—Am I cheated by 'a baby, a doll? Where's your aunt, you young 'cockatrice?—I'll let her know—she's a base wo-'man, and you are—

'*Bid.* You are in a fine humour to show your va-'lour. Tag, fetch the Captain this minute, while 'Sir Simon is warm, and let him know he is waiting 'here to cut his throat. [*Exit Tag.*] I lock'd him 'up in my bed-chamber till you came.

'*Sir Sim.* Here's an imp of darkness!—What 'would I give that my son Bob were here to thrash 'her spark, while I—ravish'd the rest of the fa-'mily.

'*Jas.* I believe we had best retire, Sir.

'*Sir Sim.* No, no, I must see her bully first: 'and, do you hear, Jasper, if I put him in a passion, 'do you knock him down.

'*Jas.* Pray, keep your temper, Sir.

Enter CAPTAIN TAG *and* PUFF.

'*Capt.* (*approaching angrily.*) What is the mean-'ing, Sir—'Ounds! it is my father, Puff; what 'shall I do? [*Aside.*

'*Puff.* (*drawing him by the coat.*) Kneel again, 'Sir.

'*Sir Sim.* I am enchanted! [*Starting.*

'*Capt.* There is no retreat; I must stand it!

'*Bid.* What's all this?

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Sir Sim. Your humble servant, Captain Fireball. ‘ You are welcome from the wars, noble Captain.— ‘ I did not think of being knock'd o' th' head, or ‘ cut up alive, by so fine a gentleman.

‘ *Capt.* I am under such confusion, Sir, that I ‘ have not power to convince you of my innocence.

‘ *Sir Sim.* Innocence! pretty lamb! And so, Sir, ‘ you have left the regiment, and the honourable ‘ employment of fighting for your country, to come ‘ home and cut your father's throat. Why, you'll ‘ be a great man in time, Bob!

‘ *Bid.* His father, Tag!

‘ *Sir Sim.* Come, come, 'tis soon done—one stroke ‘ does it—or if you have any qualms, let your squire ‘ there perform the operation.

‘ *Puff.* Pray, Sir, don't throw such temptations ‘ in my way.

Capt. Hold your impudent tongue.

‘ *Sir Sim.* Why don't you speak, Mr. Modesty? ‘ what excuse have you for leaving the army, I say?

‘ *Capt.* My affection to this lady.

‘ *Sir Sim.* Your affection, puppy!

‘ *Capt.* Our love, Sir, has been long and mutual. ‘ What accidents have happened since my going ‘ abroad, and her leaving the country, and how I ‘ have most unaccountably met you here, I am a ‘ stranger to; but whatever appearances may be, I ‘ still am, and ever was, your dutiful son.

‘ *Bid.* He talks like an angel, Tag!

‘ *Sir Sim.* Dutiful, sirrah!—have not you rivall'd ‘ your father?

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'*Capt.* No, Sir, you have rivall'd me. My claim
'must be prior to yours.

'*Bid.* Indeed, Sir Simon, he can show the best
'title to me.

'*Jas.* Sir, Sir, the young gentleman speaks well;
'and as the fortune will not go out of the family, I
'should advise you to drop your resentment, be re-
'concil'd to your son, and relinquish the lady.

'*Sir Sim.* Ay, ay, with all my heart—Look ye,
'son, I give you the girl; she's too much for me, I
'confess;—and, take my word, you'll catch a tar-
'tar.

'*Bid.* I assure you, Sir Simon, I'm not the person
'you take me for. If I have us'd you any ways ill,
'twas for your son's sake, who had my promise and
'inclinations before you: and though I believe I
'should have made you a most uncomfortable wife,
'I'll be the best daughter to you in the world; and
'if you stand in need of a lady, my aunt is disen-
'gag'd, and is the best nurse—

'*Sir Sim.* No, no, I thank you, child; you have
'so turn'd my stomach to marriage, I have no ap-
'petite left.——But where is this aunt? Won't she
stop your proceedings, think you?

'*Tag.* She's now at her lawyer's, Sir; and if you
'please to go with the young couple, and give your
'approbation, I'll answer for my old lady's consent.

'*Bid.* The Captain and I, Sir——

'*Sir Sim.* Come, come, Bob, you are but an en-
'sign, don't impose on the girl neither.

'*Capt.* I had the good fortune, Sir, to please my

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'royal general by my behaviour in a small action with the enemy, and he gave me a company.

'*Sir Sim.* Bob, I wish you joy! This is news indeed! And when we celebrate your wedding, son, 'I'll drink a half-pint bumper myself to your benefactor.

'*Capt.* And he deserves it, Sir, Such a general, 'by his example and justice, animates us to deeds of 'glory, and insures us conquest.

'*Sir Sim.* Right, my boy——Come along then.

[*Going.*

'*Puff.* Halt a little, gentlemen and ladies, if you 'please. Every body here seems well satisfied but 'myself.

'*Capt.* What's the matter, Puff?

'*Puff.* Sir, as I would make myself worthy of 'such a master, and the name of a soldier, I cannot 'put up with the least injury to my honour.

'*Sir Sim.* Heyday! what flourishes are these?

'*Puff.* Here is the man; come forth, caitiff.—'*(To Jasper.)*—He hath confess'd this day, that in 'my absence he hath taken freedoms with my lawful wife, and had dishonourable intentions against 'my bed; for which I demand satisfaction.—

'*Sir Sim. (striking him.)* What stuff is here? 'The fellow's brain's turn'd.

'*Puff.* And crack'd too, Sir; but you are my 'master's father, and I submit.

'*Capt.* Come, come, I'll settle your punctilios, 'and will take care of you and Tag hereafter, provided you drop all animosities, and shake hands this moment.

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'*Puff.* My revenge gives way to my interest; and 'I once again, Jasper, take thee to my bosom.

'*Jas.* I'm your friend again, Puff—But, hark ye '—I fear you not; and if you'll lay aside your steel 'there, as far as a broken head or a black eye, I'm 'at your service upon demand.

'*Tag.* You are very good at crowing, indeed, Mr. 'Jasper; but let me tell you, the fool that is rogue 'enough to brag of a woman's favours, must be a 'dunghill every way.——As for you, my dear hus-'band, show your manhood in a proper place, and 'you need not fear these sheep-biters.

'*Sir Sim.* The abigail is pleasant, I confess—he, 'he!—'

Bid. I'm afraid the town will be ill-natur'd enough to think I have been a little coquettish in my behaviour; but I hope, as I have been constant to the Captain, I shall be excus'd diverting myself with pretenders.

Ladies to fops and braggarts ne'er be kind;
No charms can warm 'em, and no virtues bind:
Each lover's merit by his conduct prove;
Who fails in honour, will be false in love.

[*Exeunt.*

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EPILOGUE,

BY THE SAME HAND AS THE PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS. PRITCHARD.

GOOD folks, I'm come, at my young Lady's bidding,
To say, you are all welcome to her wedding.
Th' exchange she made what mortal here can blame?
Show me the maid that would not do the same.
For sure the greatest monster ever seen,
Is doating Sixty coupled to Sixteen!
When wintry age had almost caught the fair,
Youth, clad in sunshine, snatch'd her from despair:
Like a new Semele the virgin lay,
And clasp'd her lover in the blaze of day.
Thus may each maid, the toils almost intrapt in,
Change old Sir Simon for the brisk young Captain.
I love those men of arms, they know their trade:
Let dastards sue, the sons of fire invade!
They cannot bear around the bait to nibble,
Like pretty, powder'd, patient Mr. Fribble:
To dangers bred, and skilful in command,
They storm the strongest fortress sword in hand!
Nights without sleep, and floods of tears when waking,
Show'd poor Miss Biddy was in piteous taking.
She's now quite well; for maids in that condition,
Find the young lover is the best physician;

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And without helps of art, or boast of knowledge,
They cure more women, faith, than all the college!
But to the point——I come with low petition,
For faith poor Bayes is in a sad condition;
* *The huge tall Hangman* stands to give the blow,
And only waits your pleasure—aye or no.
If you should—Pit, **Box**, and Gallery, egad,
Joy turns his senses, and the man runs mad!
But if your ears are shut, your hearts are rock,
And you pronounce the sentence—block to block:
Down kneels the bard, and leaves you when he's dead,
The empty tribute of an author's head.

* Alluding to Bayes's Prologue in The Rehearsal.

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FLORA;

OR,

HOB IN THE WELL.

A FARCE,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

COMPRESSED BY MR. HIPPESLEY INTO TWO ACTS,

FROM

THE COUNTRY WAKE OF MR. DOGGET.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,

FOR J. PARSONS, N° 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1794.

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FLORA, or HOB IN THE WELL, *is an alteration by* MR. HIPPESLEY, *from* THE COUNTRY WAKE, *written by* MR. DOGGET, *whose name will not be forgotten by the* KNIGHTS OF THE OAR, *so long as Thames rolls its silver tide from London-bridge Old Swan, to Chelsea White One.—These gentlemen were, both of them, actors; to the founder of the feast the preference is surely due, and therefore we lay before the encouragers of this undertaking the following particulars respecting*

MR. THOMAS DOGGET.

OUR author was born in the last century, in Castle-street, Dublin; where, as an actor, a writer, and a gentleman, he lived respected till the autumn of the twenty-first year of the present.

When but a very young man, Mr. Dogget made his first appearance on the stage in his native city, where he exhibited traits of merit, highly creditable to his taste and understanding; but the fostering hand of encouragement, not being held forth to lead him on to a station worthy of such abilities as he was master of, he quitted the pursuit of fortune in his own country to court her in another, where she might prove kinder. London, the grand mart

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for adventurers of every description, presented itself to his imagination in all its alluring colours, and full of those glowing hopes, which animate and strengthen young minds, in the glorious and laudable struggle for character and consequence in life, he paid a visit to

"That *spot* of glory, and that WORLD of woe."

He had no reason to lament the change of place; for he soon accomplished, in an engagement, the end of his errand; and as soon experienced the truth of the remark, that the candour and liberality of a London audience remains unequalled in any division of the habitable world.

His merits procured to him a place among the town's first favourites. In his range of characters he presented the critics of the day with a variety, which, at once, raised their admiration, and secured their support and patronage.

Drury-Lane and Lincoln's-Inn, by turns, possessed this ornament to his profession; his great excellence lay in low comedy; but, indeed, whatever he undertook proved successful; for, assisted by a finished education, a superior understanding, and a strict regard to the unerring rules of nature, he was sure to engage the public mind, whether the scene presented the modest room of an humble cottage, or the splendid apartment of elegance, fashion, and refinement.

His characters, however contrasted, possessed so much of freedom, and evinced such richness of mind, as to render them, through all their varieties,

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equally acceptable to a public, conscious of his superior claims, and equally willing to admit them.

Nor was his popularity less on the stage of life than on that of fancy; his manners were attractive and unassuming; those who conversed with him experienced the strength of his judgment; and society, proud of such a member, gave him a welcome throughout its numerous circles. The first wits of his time were constantly of his parties; among which was the accomplished Congreve; in whose excellent comedies of the OLD BACHELOR, and LOVE FOR LOVE, Mr. Dogget personified *Ben*, the honest tar, and *Fondlewife*, the old dotard, in a manner which proved that his talents were not fixed to one point, and which procured to him the universal character of a tried and genuine comedian.

Such was his success in the line of his profession, that in the course of a few years he was enabled to unite with *Cibber* and *Wilks* in the management of Drury-Lane theatre: but jealousies and heart-burnings will intrude themselves into every situation where individuals join together on the score of interest. In the year 1712, Mr. Booth, in the opinion of Mr. Dogget, was improperly admitted into a part of the concern. We presume not to enquire into the justice of his resentment; but it must be allowed to have been considerably raised, when, in consequence of his displeasure, he quitted a connection, at a time, when it was generally considered, that in so doing he gave up the receipt of at least a thousand pounds per annum.

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However this may tell for his prudence, as a man of the world, it surely must redound to his honour as an independent gentleman, for such he was at this time. He disdained to suffer interest to smother resentment; a commendable pride, and a native vigour of mind had enabled him to avoid those follies which degrade the man; and his reward was, a genteel competence to soften and to cheer the evening of his days.—But in life's full noon, he withdrew himself from all its perplexities, and enjoyed the fruits he had gathered from the tree of fortune.

That kind of excellence which distinguished Hogarth as a painter, dignified the subject of these *particulars* as a player. Even Cibber, his cotemporary, and who on that account cannot be suspected of partiality, allowed, that, apart from his merit in supporting his characters, his manner of dressing them exhibited a proof that he was as good an artist as he was an actor.

The interests of the House of Hanover were held so dear to this worthy member of society; that, at the close of the first year of the reign of the first George, he gave a coat and badge, which were rowed for on the first day of August by six watermen.

At his death he bequeathed a sum of money, the interest of which was to support the annual repetition of a ceremony, at the present time, so well known to all ranks of people resident within the sound of Bow-bell.

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Mr. Dogget left with his friends many private testimonies of his abilities as a writer; and we set down with regret, that the only public memorial of his genius, that way, is the drama before-mentioned; and from which the following entertaining After-piece is taken.

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Flora; or, Hob in the Well.

WHENEVER this lively musical farce is brought forward, it is sure to put honest John Bull into a good humour.

Poor Ryder, *now no more, personified* Hob, *in a manner highly honourable to the professional abilities of that excellent actor, but unfortunate man.*

The blundering rustic was next pictured by that genuine child of nature, Blanchard, *and his performance will not soon be forgotten, among those who know how to draw the line between the sterling of the true comedian, and the frothy frippery of the shallow buffoon.*

That this entertainment should have lain so long dormant is a matter of surprise, while our stage is in the possession of so admirable a low comedian. Its revival on the boards of Covent-garden would surely be productive; and at the same time the public would be gratified in once more beholding an old favourite in a part so congenial to his powers.

The merit of former days is not yet forgotten; and those who have attended the Hob of Dunstal *and of* Ryder *would readily repair to the theatre to attend the representation of Blanchard.*

Nor would the character sit ill upon that respectable low comedian, Munden; who might play the part, alternately, and thus present the town with a variety worthy of its most cordial welcome.

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Dramatis Personae.

COVENT-GARDEN.

	Men.
Sir Thomas Testy,	Mr. Thompson
Friendly,	Mr. Davis
Hob,	Mr. Blanchard
Old Hob,	Mr. Darley
Dick,	Mr. Ledger
Roger,	Mr. Coombes.
	Women.
Flora,	Mrs. Martyr
Betty,	Mrs. Rock
Hob's Mother,	Mrs. Webb.

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Flora; or, Hob in the Well.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Garden of Sir Thomas Testy.*

Enter FLORA *and* BETTY.

AIR I.

To the tune of, "At noon, one sultry summer's day."

Flora.

HOW wretched are we orphans made,
By dying parents wills betray'd
To guardians pow'rs, who oft invade
Our freedom, to our cost?
Like captives they their wards confine,
Pretending care; but with design
To prostitute 'em for their coin,
To whoe'er bids the most.

Betty——

Bet. Madam.

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Flo. 'Tis a sad life I lead here.

'*Bet.* Life, indeed, Madam, is a sad thing any 'where to lovers that are uncoupled.

'*Flo.* Wert thou ever in love, Betty?

'*Bet.* O most cruelly, Madam; but the man I 'lov'd had another more darling mistress—call'd 'claret—for whose sweet society I was forsaken.

'AIR II. *Ye beaux of pleasure.*

'The men of pleasure,
'Who count the seisure
'Of virgin-treasure
'A pleasing task;
'No sooner gain it,
'But they refrain it,
'Nay, oft disdain it,
'For t'other flask.

'*Flo.* And how do you find yourself now?

'*Bet.* As most folks are after the loss of an old 'lover.

'*Flo.* How's that?

'*Bet.* Ready for a new one.

'*Flo.* Wou'd I were of thy humour.——But, my silly heart's so set upon Mr. Friendly, that all mankind beside are no more than my own sex to me.

'*Bet.* Then you must have him, Madam, or you'll 'go into a consumption——

'*Flo.* Ay, but how shall I come at him, Betty?

'*Bet.* Why, run a risk, Madam.

'*Flo.* What risk?'

Bet. Run away with him.

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Flo. Psha! How is that possible? 'when my uncle 'locks me up as if I were his only bottle of brandy!

'*Bet.* You know, Madam, I have sometimes the 'keys of both in my keeping——and if you please 'to uncork your conscience, I'll undertake, in eight-'and-forty hours, Mr. Friendly shall have at least 'half a dozen godowns of you.

'*Flo.* Ah, Betty! I'm afraid you flatter me.

'*Bet.* Nay, Madam, you are as good a judge of 'that as I; for you must own, he has a very pro-'mising person.

'*Flo.* Psha! I don't think of his person.

'*Bet.* If any other woman thought half so much 'of it, you wou'd pull her commode for her.

'*Flo.* Pooh!' But 'I mean' I am afraid you are not sincere in your advice; and that if I should trust you with any design of that nature, you wou'd discover it to my uncle.

Bet. Ah! but if I were to live with you, and have my wages rais'd, after you married—I know whose suspicion does me a great deal of wrong.

Flo. Swear then to be true, and I will trust you. But, dear Betty, be out of the fashion for once, and keep your oath; I'll tell you why I so earnestly intreat you.

AIR III. *I, who once was great, now little am grown.*

Custom prevailing so long 'mongst the great,
Makes oaths easy potions to sleep on,
Which many (on gaining good places) repeat,
Without e'er designing to keep one.

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For an oath's seldom kept, as a virgin's fair fame;
A lover's fond vows, or a prelate's good name;
A lawyer to truth; a statesman from blame;
Or a patriot-heart in a courtier.

Bet. Here then, I swear, by all my hopes and perquisites; by the sweet profits of my place in view, and double wages in reversion; by your lac'd shoes too big, and those too little; by the silk gown you'll give me at your wedding; by all 'your mantuas, 'heads, hoops, short hoods and cloaks, and as I hope 'your last blue atlas never will be worn again!' I swear——

Flo. That you will inviolably keep my secrets, and assist me to your utmost in running away with Mr. Friendly.

Bet. I swear.

Flo. Then I will trust you; and when I'm married, Betty, every article of your oath shall be made good to you—Look here then, here's a letter I had just written to Mr. Friendly, wherein I've promis'd, at twelve o'clock to-night to be upon the mount in the garden; and if he will take care to meet me on t'other side, and set a ladder against the wall, I'll toss over my band-box, venture catching cold in the dew, and take my fortune with him.

Bet. There's mettle in the proposal, Madam—Let's see the letter; he shall have it in a quarter of an hour, though I carry it myself.

Flo. But I won't venture neither, unless his answer tells he'll be ready—So, dear Betty, be careful; I have no mortal to trust but thee.

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Bet. And no mortal fitter to be trusted. [*Exit.*

Flo. So, now my heart's at ease——I find my resolution's good at the bottom; and since I have set my head upon running away, 'tis not my old uncle nor the garden-wall shall stop me, tho' he were as wise as a bishop, and the wall as high as a church-steeple.

AIR IV. *Man in imagination.*

Tho' my uncle strives to immure me,
My lover's voice shall lure me
To leap from the mount o'er the garden-wall,
And fly this hated place.

Oh, a tedious day to me 'tis;
But when Sol's in the arms of his Thetis,
Swift as a roe (at my hero's call)
I'll elude my hunter's chace.

Ah!——

Enter Sir THO. TESTY.

Sir Tho. How now, Mrs. Irreverence! Am I such a hobgoblin that you start at the sight of me?

Flo. Sir, I did not think any harm; but when you come upon one unawares——

Sir Tho. Unawares! What! I surpris'd you then? Your head was full of other matters, which, I suppose, that close committee of the flesh and the devil have absolutely resolv'd to be the fundamentals of your constitution.

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'AIR V. *As I was walking thro' Hyde-Park.*

'When a girl fifteen years does attain,
'Love's follies invading her brain,
'Her virtue's held by a slight rein.
'For equipage, hurry, and noise,
'Gay cloathing, and such female toys,
'She'll forego more substantial joys.
'To a feather or powder'd toupee
'Her heart soon a captive would be.
'To keep such a one chaste, we must lock her up fast:
'That maxim best pleases me.

Flo. Lord, Sir, how strangely you talk to one!

Sir Tho. Talk! you mal-apert; why, who shou'd talk to you but I? Whom am I, hussy? who am I?

Flo. You are my uncle by relation, my guardian by my father's will, and my jailor against mine.

Sir Tho. Then while you are my prisoner, hussy, how dare you take such liberty?

Flo. Because liberty, Sir, is the sweetest thing a prisoner can take.

Sir Tho. Don't you think in your conscience now, mistress, you deserve to be lock'd up?

Flo. I think in my conscience you ought to let me marry since I've a mind to't.

Sir Tho. Provoking! Dare you own this to my face?

Flo. Why, Sir, is't a fault? You have kept me in prison for these ten months, and I did not know but my confessing it might deserve a little of your mercy.

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Sir Tho. Astonishing! The devil has harden'd you, hussy! you are a sight! Go, go to your chamber; people will stare at you; I would not have you seen abroad in this condition for——O Lord! your brain's turn'd! You shall bleed, mistress; I'll have your room darken'd: Water-gruel, discipline and water-gruel, ye gods!

Flo. Look'e, uncle, I find you have a mind to drive me to a hard bargain; therefore, to let you see that I am no hagler, I'll make you an offer which shall fairly come up to the most you can make of me ——As thus—

Sir Tho. What new distraction hast thou got in thy head now?

Flo. Hear me. You know I have 8000l. to my fortune, and that by my father's will you are to be allow'd the whole interest of it, till I am either married or of age, to reimburse your expences in maintaining me; which said maintenance, by a modest computation, may stand you in—let me see—about seven or eight pounds a-year, (for I have no cloaths but my mother's.)—Now, Sir, if you'll immediately give me the liberty of marrying the man I have a mind to, I'll engage he shall consent to the throwing of my fortune into the public funds, the minute you throw me into his arms. So you shall have the use of my pence till I am of age, as a premium for advancing to him the use of my person.

Sir Tho. Hum! The girl begins to talk sensibly—But 'tis not yet proper to understand her——Look'e, child, when you have persuaded your lover to make

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the same proposal under his hand, I shall then believe you are equally mad to come at one another—In the mean time, let me advise you to your chamber, from whence I will allow you the lovely prospect of the garden. [*Exit.*

Flo. You may chance to fret for this, my very wise uncle. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Before the garden-wall.*

Enter FRIENDLY *and* SERVANT.

Fri. What a watchful old rogue is this?

Ser. A very dragon, Sir.

Fri. To use a young creature so unmercifully.

Ser. Nay, Sir, so uncivilly.

Fri. How, sirrah?

Ser. To force her to such extremities, to make her straddle over a great wall, and risk her neck down a ladder at midnight, when he ought to lend her his hand into a coach and six, and out of his great gate at noon day, to come to you, Sir. But the rascal has no breeding.

Fri. By Mercury, I'll be even with him.

Ser. You have reason, Sir; for though I say it—

Fri. That shou'd not say it.

Ser. She is a lovely piece of temptation, Sir.

Fri. What's o'clock, sirrah?

Ser. By the moon's rising, I believe it may be about, a—past ten.

Fri. Then, sirrah, about—past twelve—

Ser. You'll have one of her blue silk stockings straddling over the wall, Sir——

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AIR VI. *At past one o'clock and a cold frosty morning.*

FRIENDLY *sings.*

At past twelve o'clock, and a fine summer's morning,
When all in the village sleep pleasantly,
Cynthia's bright beams all nature adorning
Shall guide my swift steps to my lovely she.
Then my fair Flora, fraught with kind wishes,
I'll fold in my arms, with amourous kisses,
Which serve as preludes to more solid blisses—
Soon as the vicar has made us one.

But where's the country fellow you promis'd should carry my answer to her letter?

Ser. Who, Hob, Sir? Here he is; and if any suspects his face for a pimp's, I have no skill in the science, Sir.

Enter HOB.

Fri. Well, Hob, canst thou carry this letter to Sir Thomas Testy's house for me?

Hob. Zir, yes.

Fri. Do so, and give it to Madam Flora; but take care nobody sees you deliver it.

Hob. Yes, Zir—But must I carry it to-night?—'Tis main dark.

Fri. You must go immediately.

Hob. I hope, Zir, there's no difference between you and Zir Tomas?

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Fri. Why dost hope so?

Hob. Why truly, Zir, I do hear there be; and therefore I don't care to meddle or make between friends, for 'tis but an unthankful office; and you know Zir Tomas is very crusty, and if he does but zuspect that I shaud conzarn mysel, mayhap he may take the law of me; and you knaw, Zir, that law is a vrightful thing.

AIR VII. *She got money by th' bargain.*

The terrible law, when it fastens its paw
On a poor man, it gripes 'till he's undone;
And what I am doing may turn to my ruin,
Tho' rich as the Lord Mayor of London.
Therefore I'll be wary what message I carry,
Unless we first make a zure bargain;
I will be 'demnify'd, throughly satisfy'd,
That ch'am shan't zuffer a varding.

Fri. Pish, the law shall never trouble thee; I'll secure thee from any harm.

Hob. Very well, Zir, very well; that's as much as I can desire: but pray, don't take unkindly what I say; for you know no man is willing to bring himzel into a primunire if he can help it.

Fri. No, no—Prithee be gone.

Hob. I will, Zir, I will—for—for—Pray, Zir, be pleas'd to read the zuperscription for me.

Fri. S'death, how I am tortur'd with this foolish fellow, and I can send nobody else without being

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suspected—Don't trouble thyself with the superscription, but deliver it as I bid thee.

Hob. Very good, Zir, very good—'Tis main dark—would it not do as well, Zir, if I should carry it in the morning? I had rather go in the morning.

Fri. Why so?

Hob. Why, truly, Zir, I'll tell you: at the lower end of Zir Tomas's orchard, one of our poor neighbours being in a disparaging condition has gone and hang'd himzel—Now there is zome do zay that he walks by night in zeveral zorts of shapes.

Fri. What, and so you are afraid, are you?

Hob. No, indeed, Zir, ch'am not afraid—I thank marcy, I defy the devil and all his works.

Fri. A pox on thee then, get thee gone.

Hob. Tho' I must tell you, I have a great concait he will appear to me,—vor you must know, to-morrow the crowner's quest is to zit upon him, whereof, d'ye zee, I'm to be one: and who knows but he may have zomething upon his spirits that may make him break his mind to me: and if zo, let me tell you, I'm afraid it will make a bad day for zomebody—vor, if Sir Tomas had kept his fences whole, mayhap this man had ne'er been tempted to ha' gone into his ground to ha' hang'd himzel. But be that as it will, I'll do your business vor you; therefore pray take you no care Zir——

Fri. Prithee about it then.

Hob. Ay, ay, I'll warrant you, don't trouble yourzel no vurder—vor if I zay I'll do't, I'll do't that's my humour. [*Exeunt.*

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SCENE III.—*A Wood and Garden Wall.*

Enter Sir THOMAS *and* SERVANTS.

Sir Tho. 'Twill be a hard matter to sink any of 'the principal, indeed; so that, cou'd the girl make 'good the proposal, I wou'd not care how soon she 'were kiss'd black in the face; but should I give 'her the least liberty upon't, 'tis possible, when she 'has made use on't, her conscience might desire to 'be off. And I dare swear her lover will spare 'neither care nor cost to come at her without my 'consent; and gold in particular has a prevailing 'influence in a love-affair; therefore I must watch 'my ward myself—Servants may be corrupted.

'AIR VIII. *We'll learn to be merry and wise.*

'To guard my Hesperian tree
'Requires more care than of old;
'That was robb'd by a half deity,
'And without the assistance of gold.
'But, in this age, gold softens the mind,
'A governante's tongue 'twill lay mute,
'Charm prudes, make a coy virgin kind,
'Whilst a lover (with ease) steals the fruit.'

D'ye hear, rascals! look sharp; for this is the usual hour that your soft sighing rogues run a caterwauling.

Ser. Sir! Sir! yonder's somebody with a light coming down the field.

Sir Tho. Stand still then, and observe.

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Enter HOB, *whistling.*

Hob. Zo, this is the house—now let me see—how shall I go about to do this zame business?——If that old fox, Zir Thomas, shou'd 'spy me, he'd maul me vor zartain——But let me alone, I'll be cunning enough for him, I'll warrant ye—If he zees me, he must have more eyes than two.——Hold, hold, now let me zee for this same letter—O, here it is——for Madam Flo——Flo——Madam Flora.

Sir Tho. Where are you carrying this letter friend? [*Sir Tho. snatching it.*

Hob. Letter, Zir?

Sir Tho. Letter, Sir! ay, letter, Sir! who did you bring it from?

Hob. Bring it vrom, Zir? I brought it from nobody, not I.

Sir Tho. How came you by it?

Hob. By it, Zir? I did not buy it; why, I vound it in my pocket, Zir.

Sir Tho. Found it in your pocket!—What, did it grow there then, ha? Where are you going with it?

Hob. Going with it, Zir? I dan't know where cha'am going with it, not I.

Sir Tho. What do you here at this time o'night?

Hob. I can't tell what I do here, not I—I'll go home, Zir, if you please—I wish you a good night.

Sir Tho. Hold, hold, a little, friend; let me reward you first for bringing, however.

Hob. Not a varthing, Zir; indeed, I must not take one varthing, for Maister Friendly charg'n me to th' contrary; therefore, pray, dan't offer it.

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Sir Tho. O, did he so?——But something I will give you, however: Pray take that, and that, sirrah.

[*Beats him.*

Hob. O Lard! O Lard! what de ye strik'n vor? avore Gad, I'll take the law of you, zee an I don't —what, do you go to murder me?

Sir Tho. I'll law you, you rogue—are you their letter-carrier? there's more for you, sirrah.

Hob. Bear witness, bear witness, zee an you dan't pay for this. O Lard! O Lard!

Sir Tho. Here, sirrahs, lay hold of him, till I examine the letter. Let's see—" To Mrs. Flora"—right.

" The proposal you mention, in case of extremi-
" ty, will certainly do; but it will be a much plea-
" santer piece of justice to bite him for his barbarity.
" *(A son of a whore, he means me to be sure.)* The
" ladder, and all things shall be ready exactly at
" twelve to-night *(Ouns!)* If you have any thing
" farther of moment, this fellow is honest, and will
" convey it safe to your eternal lover,

" TOM FRIENDLY."

Yes, yes, I find he is honest, with a pox to him, and I'll reward him accordingly—Here, desire that honest gentleman to walk down to the bottom of that well—And let him stay there 'till I call for him.

Hob. I con't do it, as I hope to be zav'd I con't; pray vorbear, and don't murder an innocent man.

[*Falls on his knees.*

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AIR IX. *My father he left me a wealthy estate.*

Sings. I never 'till now was conzarn'd in strife;
Have mercy, Sir Thomas, and spare poor Hob's life,
And give me my vreedom, as I had bevore—
I'll be a good boy, and I'll do zo no more.
Indeed I won't——

Sir Tho. In with him, I say——

Hob. O Lard! Maister Jonathan, I vorewarn you, dan't be conzarn'd in this: Consider what you do.

Sir Tho. Oons! in with him.

Hob. You are all principals, there are no 'complishes in murder. Help! Murder!

[*They put him down, and exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber.*

Enter FLORA.

Flo. I heard a strange noise without: I wish things go as they shou'd—'My heart beats, as if 'Mr. What-d'ye-call 'em were in my arms.'—Well, this love's a terrible thing—Wou'd the worst on't were over, I'm afraid I shall never be able to go thro' with it—I am sure here's an odd bustle about it.

Enter BETTY.

How now?

Bet. Undone! undone! Madam! Your uncle has intercepted Mr. Friendly's letter in answer to yours, and all your designs are discovered; he raves and

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tears like a madman, and in his passion he has thrown the poor fellow that brought it into the great well, and swears if any body offers to help him out, without his order, he'll throw them in after him.

Flo. Well, if I am here alive, I thought it wou'd come to nothing—It vexes the heart of me.

Bet. But come, Madam, don't be wholly discouraged; for John tells me, 'tis a hundred to one but the fellow's drown'd.

Flo. Pshaw! I wish my uncle was drown'd in his room.

Bet. No, Madam; but he'll be hang'd, and that's as well.

Flo. Do you really think so?

Bet. Poz.

Flo. Then I'll marry in spite of his teeth.

Bet. Right; when he's in one noose, you may slip into t'other.

Flo. Dear Betty, step out and see how 'tis with the fellow, for I'm in a thousand frights; and if things are—you know how—ask when the assizes begin. [*Exit Betty.*

AIR X. *The lass with the nut-brown hair.*

'To forgive, sure, is great,
'But revenge for wrong's sweet,
'So for once let resentment prevail.
'My guardian relation
'Is in a situation
'Should move a soft breast to bewail:

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' But his sordid cruelty
' Has so perverted me,
' I can hear of his death without pain.
' When he's swinging in his shoes,
' I'll fix my marriage noose,
' And (with justice) great Hymen shall reign.
' [*Exit.*'

SCENE V.—*A Wood and Garden Wall.*

Enter OLD HOB *and his* WIFE.

O. Hob. Come, wife, never troubble thy zelf, a wull go a rawging zometimes, and there's an end on't, a wull come home again I warrant 'un.

Wife. I think o' my conscience 'tis no great matter whether he does or no.—A base raugue, to be out of the way at such a busy time as thick is. The zun has been up this hour and quarter, and that grauceless boy, I warrant, has not been a-bed yet. Prithee, husband, step and zee an he ben't zooting at the park-gate, and I'll draw the water in the mean time.

O. Hob. Do you then. [*Exit.*

Wife. This boy's the plague of my life, I think ——'twere more than time the gammon had been boiled by now. And now the volk will come to the wake bevore he be cold—and then it waun't be vit to be eaten—A jackanapes! when I bid 'en, and beg 'en, and prayed 'en to stay, and he would go—And yet notwithstanding all I have zaid, cou'd I lay eyes on him, I shau'd vorget his roguery, and vorgiv'n.

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AIR IX. *The Logan wäter is so deep.*

Sings. The shepherdess with looks dismay'd,
Because her fav'rite lamb has stray'd;
In angry search her time employs!
But found—that passion's lost in joys.
So will it be with silly me,
When next my truant-boy I see;
My heart pleads strongly on his side,
And I shall rather kiss than chide.

Here have I been blaming the poor boy for not minding his business, and at the same time neglect my own; I must haste to wind up the bucket, or I shall have husband back bevore I've drawn a drop of water.

[*Goes to the well, and sings.*] Did you not hear, &c. Lud, lud, 'tis main heavy—Heyday—I believe old Nick's in the bottom o' the bucket, for my part. (*Hob cries out.*) Oh, a ghost! a ghost!

[*Hob appears in the bucket; she lets the rope go, and he sinks again.*

Enter OLD HOB.

O. Hob. Heyday! what's the matter, with a murrain t'ye? is the woman in her tantrums?

Wife. A ghost! a ghost!—Hob's ghost in the well—ah!——

O. Hob. The woman's turn'd vool, I think—let me zee; if the devil be in the well, I'll vetch 'en out on't—here's a rout indeed—Wauns! I think the devil be in the bucket—But now I have got 'en half

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HOB IN THE WELL.
Act 1. Sc. 5.

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way, I'll knaw what zort of a devil 'tis; and if he ben't a zivil one, I'll zouze 'en and zop 'en in the bottom agen.

Y. Hob. Ah! hau'd vast, vather, 'tis I! 'tis I!

Wife. Ah! 'tis there agen.

O. Hob. Hand your peace, I zay; the devil can't get in a word for you, I think—Who's there? Hob?

Y. Hob. Ay, vor lov's zake pull away, vather.

O. Hob. Prithee lend's thy hond, wife—Bless my eyes! 'tis Hob indeed—What in the name of wonder dost thou here, lad?

Y. Hob. Ah! dan't ask questions now, vather—— get me home—Zir Thomas has don't; but if there be law in all the king's kindom, I'll capias 'en vor zartain; I dan't knaw but it may prove the death of me; I'll zue him next hizi-prizis, an't cost me vorty shillings. I'll zue him, come on't what will—zee if I don't make him pay vor't.

AIR XII. *To an Irish tune.* Trio.

Wife. Oh! my poor boy,
O. Hob. His looks are stark wild.
Wife. Cou'd Sir Thomas destroy
O. Hob. So hopeful a child?
Y. Hob. I'll revenge if I con.
Wife. Ah! talk so no more.
O. Hob. He's a great mon,
O. Hob and *Wife.* And we are but poor.
Y. Hob. All you do zay can signify nothing,
I'll capias 'en for't, let cost what it will.
Wife. Go to bed, boy, whilst I get thee dry clothing.

O. Hob. Think thou art taught to return good for ill.
Y. Hob. I'll indict 'en i' th' crown,
And bind o'er to the sessions,
Tho'f I zell my heifer and the auld mare,
Udsblead I'd hang 'en or drown 'en.
O. Hob. Forbear zuch expressions.
Wife. Prithee vorgive, and be not zevere.
Y. Hob. I'll never vorgive, and will be zevere.
Wife. Oh, poor Hob! come along, child, and I'll get thee a little zugar-zops to comfort thy bowels.
[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*

Enter Sir THOMAS *and* SERVANT.

Sir Thomas.

JOHN, what's become of the fellow that fell into the well last night? has any body taken any care of him.,

Ser. No, Sir; your worship said he should lie there till your worship was pleased to call for him——

Sir Tho. Oons, sirrah, you have not drown'd the fellow, have you?

Ser. Who, I drown him, Sir! nay, nay, hau'd yee, I am but a servant, and 'twas you bad me; an any mischief shou'd come on't, 'tis you must answer it—Flesh! what have I to do with it?

Sir Tho. You impudent rogue, wou'd you put your villainies upon me? Did not I see you collar him, did not you lay violent hands upon him, sirrah, and am not I a witness against you?

Ser. Lard! Lard! at this rate, a man had as good be a galley-slave as a servant—If one don't do as one's bid, on's head's broke; and if one does, one's to be hang'd fort—But come what will, the gallows will hold two, that's the best on't.

Sir Tho. He says true, faith—Well, well, keep your own counsel, sirrah, and I'll see what I can do to save you.

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Ser. Nay, nay, as for that, do you see, do as you are cause—let it go thick way, or let it go thack way, 'tis all a case to me go which way it will; one good turn will require another.

Sir Tho. Hold your peace, sirrah—and be gone—[*Exit Servant.*] This surly dog is not to be frighted, I see; I must (as is customary with a man in power) protect this fellow in his roguery for my own sake.

AIR XIII. *I have left the world as the world found me.*

Sir Thomas sings.

'A rogue that is hired
'To do what's required,
'And ne'er stick at honour or conscience;
'To compass his ends,
'Will destroy his best friends,
'For a villain's sure friendship is nonsense.
'Yet still he may laugh,
'Well assur'd he is safe,
'And despise all attempts to accuse him;
'For his patron oft-times
'Promoting his crimes,
'Must (for self-preservation) excuse him.'

Enter SERVANT *with a letter.*

Ser. Sir, here's a letter for you.
Sir Tho. Who brought it?
Ser. Mr. Friendly's man, Sir.
Sir Tho. Let's see. [*Reads.*

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" Sir, Your niece informs me, that she has made
" you a proposal concerning our marriage,
" which I am willing to ratify whenever you
" please to do me the honour of a meeting.—
" Yours."

Humph! that meeting may be to meet with my niece, for ought I know——I must have the particulars under his hand before I seem to understand him: Therefore, that I don't understand him, shall be my answer——In the mean time, I'll put on a smoother look to the girl, and show her a little of the country-diversion from the mount in the garden; and if they are in earnest, that good-humour will work her to work him up to my price.—Bid the fellow stay till I write him an answer. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Green before Old Hob's House, and Garden-wall.*

Enter OLD HOB *and* WIFE.

Wife. Come, husband, now the boy has got on his dry cloths, let him be stirring a bit—Come, come, make haste, the town will be vull of volk before we shall get vitled.

O. Hob. Don't trouble thyzelf, wife; every thing within doors is ready, and there's nothing wanting but the zign to be put up; and, look'ye, that shall be done present——Hob! Hob!

Y. Hob. (within.) What zay you, vather?

O. Hob. Tap the ale; quick, quick.

Y. Hob. Ay, ay, vather.

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O. Hob. There—now he that will drink good ale, let him come to the sign of the pot-lid—Come, wife, let's to our business within. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FRIENDLY, *disguised*; SERVANT, *and* COUNTRY PEOPLE.

Fri. If this disguise does not conceal me———

Ser. You'll then be out of countenance to no purpose, Sir——But pray, Sir, what do you propose by turning ballad-singer?

Fri. I do propose that Flora shall know me by my voice, and that consequently her wits will soon be at work to come at me.

Ser. Well, Sir, but of what use can I be? for I can no more sing than I can fast.

Fri. But you can help to draw other gaping fools about me.

Ser. There's some sense in that, indeed, Sir.

Enter Sir THOMAS, FLORA, *and* BETTY.

Sir Tho. Come, niece, if you must see the pastime, you may have as fair a prospect of it here as in the crowd.

Flo. I like it very well here, Sir.

Fri. Well, ho! this same is intitled, An excellent new Ballad in praise of the Country-wake.

Sir Tho. Hark! we shall have a merry ballad.

Flo. Bless my eyes! is not that he, Betty?

Bet. The very he, Madam—but hush.

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AIR XIV. A Ballad. *Rare doings at Bath.*

Friendly sings.

I'll sing you a ditty, and warrant it true,
Give but attention unto me a while,
Of transactions at court, and in country too,
Toilsome pleasures, and pleasing toil.
Accept it (I pray) as your help-mates you take;
To some 'twill give joy,
And some others annoy:
All's fair at a country wake.
All's fair, &c.

" At courts we see patriots noble and just,
" Fit for employments of honour and pow'r;
" But then there are sycophants, unfit for trust,
" Blend with the great, and in number are more;
" Slaves, who would honour and honesty stake,
" With sordid intention,
" To get place or pension:
" Strange news at a country-wake.
" Strange news, &c."

Some ladies at court are styled unpolite,
Because truly virtuous and prone to no ill;
Whilst others who sparkle in diamonds bright,
Are stript of their pride at *basset* or *quadrille*,
'Till their losses at play do their lord's credit shake;
Then, their toys to recover,
They'll grant the last favour:
Strange news at a country-wake.
Strange news, &c.

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Here most of our gentlemen patriots are,
Tho' very bad statesmen, I freely confess;
They design harm to none—but a fox or a hare,
And are always found loyal in war and in peace.
The farmer's industry does earth fertile make!
The husbandman's ploughing,
His planting and sowing,
Gets health and good cheer at a country-wake.
Gets health, &c.

Our girls blooming fair, without washes or paints,
From neighbouring villages hither resort;
They kiss sweet as roses, yet virtuous as saints,
(Who can say more for the ladies at court?)
No worldly cares vex 'em, asleep or awake;
But their time they improve
In peace and true love,
And innocent mirth, at the country-wake.
And innocent, &c.

The schemes of a courtier are full of intrigue;
Here's all fair and open, dark deeds we despise:
Set rural contentment 'gainst courtly fatigue,
Who chooses the former is happy and wise.
Now let's pray for the king, and, for England's sake,
From all faction free,
May his subjects agree
As well at the court as the country-wake.
As well at the court, &c.

Do you think she knew me?

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Ser. Knew you, Sir! why, I bought one of your ballads for her, and she tipt the wink upon me, with as much as to say, Desire him not to go till he hears from me.—Supppose, Sir, you took a cup of nappy here, to pass away the time a little.

Fri. Call for what you have a mind to.

Ser. Here, house!——

Enter HOB.

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming. Your zarvant Maister Friendly, I'm glad to zee you, you're welcome to the vair.

Fri. I thank you, honest Hob.

Hob. I shau'd knaw that gentleman——Maister Richard, I think?

Ser. Ay, Hob; how do'st do?

Hob. O Laird, Maister, haw d'ye do? Come, pray, zit down.—Maister Friendly—Come, pray stay, and drink one pot avore you go.

Fri. Sit down, or this fellow's impertinence will make us observ'd. What do'st thou do with an apron on, Hob?

Hob. Adod, I putn't on but just now; vather will do as neighbours do, and every one i' th' town almost zells ale vair-day—but now we zell several other sorts of liquors, and wine too, an occasion be.

Fri. Wine!

Hob. Ay, all zorts of wine.

Fri. Say'st thou so? Bring us some claret then.

Hob. Claret, Zir! We have no claret; we mun not zell claret, 'tis against th' law.——Now you may

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ha' some o' your port, your red port now, or your white port, or such zort of stuff.

Fri. Such stuff as thou hast then, prithee bring us.

Hob. Yes, Zir—Ch'am coming—Now in my mind, Zir, what do you think of a little zack; a little zack now, and zome o' your zugar in't, is main good.

Fri. Prithee, bring what thou lik'st best thyself; for I am sure 'twill please no palate but thy own.

[*Exit Hob.*

Ser. Sir, with humble submission, I don't yet discover any great hopes from this same project of yours. Pray, Sir, how do you propose to come at the lady?

Fri. While the garden door's shut, and that old dragon is so watchful of the fruit, there are but little hopes indeed. However, I won't quit the place; fortune may yet do something unexpectedly to befriend me.

Enter HOB, *with pots, tobacco, bread, cheese, and sugar.*

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming.——Here, Zir.——

Fri. Where's the sack, Hob?

Hob. Zack, Zir! Odd I dan't knaw, I thought you zaid you had rather have ale.—Ale is indeed much wholesomer for your English stomachs.—For my part, I'd rather have ale now. Maister Richard, bite a bit avore you drink; come, and in the mean time I'll put a little zugar in the ale, and make it as good as I con for you. Come, Zir, against you're dispos'd.

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Fri. Thank you, Hob——This fellow's kindness will poison me. [*Aside.*

Ser. Not at this rate of tasting, Sir; for he has not left a drop at the bottom.

Hob. Adod, 'tis main good, Zir.—Will you have t'other pot, Zir?

Fri. No; prithee drink this too; and then fetch us a couple.

Hob. Yes, Zir, I will.——Ch'am coming. [*Exit Hob.*

Sir Tho. Come, my merry countrymen, every man take his lass, and give us a dance or two, and then we'll have the cudgels out.

Count. Yes, a'nt like your worship, we are all ready. Come, Scratch, strike up. [*Dances.*

Enter HOB.

Hob. Ay, marry Zir; well done, Ralph! zet to un, Joan! zet to un———

Wife. (within.) Hob! Hob!

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming—Tol, lol—In, Mary——Sides all now——Sides all——

Fri. Hob! Hob!

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming, Maister.—Tol, lol.

O. Hob. (within.) Hob! Hob!

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming——What a plague ails vather, trow? An old vool! Udsblead, he makes more a noise—Set to now, William—Ah, rarely done! In, Mary; ah, dainty Mary! Turn her about, John—now, now! a murrain!—You're

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quite out.—Look, Ralph should ha' cast off; and while John had turn'd Mary about, Tomas shou'd ha' led up Nan, and Joan met Ralph at bottom agen; mean-while, John shou'd have sided with Mary, and then Mary shou'd back to back with Ralph, and then Tomas had come in again in his own place; and so all had been right.——Come, begin again.—Strike up, Scratch. Tol, lol.

O. Hob. (within.) Hob! Hob! Where be ye?

Hob. Ch'am coming, ch'am coming: What a devil, can't you be quiet a bit?—Tol, lol.

Enter OLD HOB,

O. Hob. Heyday! heyday! This is rare sport. Udsblead, I'll strap you, you base rawg ye—Must you be dauncing here, and your mother and I at work? [*Strikes him.*

Hob. Heyday, what's the matter now? What, must I be beat all days o' my life?

O. Hob. You graceless rawg, mind your business then, do; yonder's your poor mother within, a scawring and scawring 'till she sweats again, and nobody to draw one drop of beer.

Hob. I don't care a varthing—I won't draw a drop more, if you go to that; do your worst, and take your course.

O. Hob. Sirrah, come in, and dan't stand dauncing here, dan't ye.

Hob. I won't go in, zo I won't; if that trouble ye, I will daunce, and daunce agen. Tol, lol, lol—

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AIR XV. *Old Hob.*

Sure never was seen such a rebel,
Thou worst of undutiful boys;
Thy tongue, like the builders of Babel,
Confuses the ear with its noise.
Remember thy dreary figure,
When out of the well thou wast brought;
Thy mother and I toil'd with vigour
To save thee—And now thou'rt worth nought.

Ah! thou'rt an untoward boy as e'er was born. Marcy forgive me for begetting thee. [*Exit O. Hob.*

Hob. Marry come up, what's here to do, I trow?

Country-p. Here's the cudgels, an't like you; will your worship please to have us begin?

Sir Tho. Ay, ay, by all means; make haste, Roger, and bring forth the hat and favour.

Rog. Here 'ti, an't please you.

Sir Tho. Hang it up there; and he that wins it, let him wear it—The first Somersetshire man that breaks a head, here's half-a-crown for him to drink; and he that breaks that rogue Hob's head, shall have another.

Hob. Shall he?

AIR XVI. *Go vind the vicar of Taunton Dean.*

Go vind the vicar of our town,
And he'll hauld ye an angel o' my head;
And I'll bet you another, and stake it down,
That I break both his and thy head——

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Few bouts will set these matters right;
For my cudgel, an't prove a good one,
Shau'd make no distinction 'twixt yeoman and knight,
Sing heydon, dooden, cudden, &c.

Look ye, he that breaks my head shall ha' zomewhat to do, I'll tell you that.—Let'n be who he wull, he shall earn his money; ecod I'll rib'n; and look ye, to begin, here I'll take up the cudgel—and now let the best man here take up t'other a'n he dare——If he be a Zomerzetshire man, let'n be a Zomerzetshire man.——I fight for Gloucestershire, I don't care who knaws it.

Sir Tho. At him, at him there! What! is there nobody dare venture upon him? Neighbour Puzzlepate, take up t'other cudgel.

Puz. Not I, an't please you; I have enough of 'en already, he broke my head but last week.

Sir Tho. Roger—Sirrah, do you take up t'other cudgel, and thrash him, d'ye hear, thrash him soundly, sirrah.

Rog. I ca'nt promise that, Sir; I'll do my best: I'll break his head if I can, in love; and if he breaks mine, much good may do him.

Fri. So, if Hob does but get the better of the combat, the testy knight will certainly be provok'd to come down, and then we shall have sport.—Dick, help to encourage him.

Ser. Well said, Hob! O brave Hob! now for Gloucestershire, Hob!

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Hob. I warrant ye, Maister; let me alone.

Fri. Here, Hob, there's an angel for thee; and if thou break'st his head, I'll give thee another.

Hob. Don't ye vear, maister; ecod I'll 'noint 'en.

Rog. Do, if thou can'st——I don't fear thee, Hob.

Hob. 'Sblead, I'll dress thy jacket, I'll dowse thy Zomerzetshire coat for thee.

Rog. Will you?

AIR XVII. *In Taunton Dean.*

In Taunton-Dean I was born and bred,
And 'tis knawn I don't value a broken head;
Nor shou'd I fear Hob, were he stout in his wrath,
As Hercules or Goulding of Bath.
Fal, lal, &c.

Come on.

Ser. O brave Hob!

All. O brave Roger!——Huzza!

[*Hob breaks his head, takes down the hat and favour, puts it on, and struts about.*

Hob. Ecod I have don't, I have don't, efaith.

AIR XVIII. *Now comes on the glorious year.*

Now, brave boys, the fight is done,
And I the prize have fairly won;
For I knew I cou'd beat'n four to one.
And that he'll sore remember.
Fal, lal, &c.

Sir Tho. Foul, foul, foul.

Hob. Fair, fair, fair.

Sir Tho. You lie, you dog, 'twas foul.

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All. Huzza.

Fri. Stand upon your guard, Hob, the Knight's coming down.

Hob. Is he? Let'n come, and welcome; here I'll stand; I'll take no other than St. George's guard. If he let's drive at me, vore gad, I'll hit'n o'er the sconce, an he were a knight of gold.

Sir Tho. Where are these bumkins? Now, who says 'tis fair? I say 'tis foul.

Hob. I say 'tis fair.

[*Sir Thomas endeavouring to come at Hob, is held by the country people.*

AIR XIX. *Come, sound up your trumpets.*

Pray let'n come, neighbours, for I ben't afeard:
Dost think I'll be scar'd, like a child at a rod?
I'll keep my ground bravely, and St. George's guard.
Take care then, Zir Tomas, I'll 'noint ye, ecod.
With a fal, lal, &c.

[*They let him go, Hob breaks his head; he draws his sword. Hob and Countrymen run away; Sir Thomas pursues.*

Fri. to *Flo.* Now, now, dear creature, if ever you would redeem yourself or me from eternal bondage, be kind, and fly into the arms of liberty.

Flo. What wou'd you have me to do?

AIR XX. *Come, open the door, sweet Betty.*

O fly from this place, dear Flora,
Thy jailor has left thee free;
And before the next blush of Aurora,
You'll find a guardian in me.

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Flo. Fain would I exchange for the better;
Confinement can have no charms.
Fri. Think which of your prisons is sweeter;
This or a young lover's arms,

Madam, your uncle has left the garden-door open; there's no mortal now to oppose your flight—— Scout——Scout, you dog, and see that the enemy don't rally upon us.

Ser. Ay, ay, Sir. [*Exit Servant.*

Flo. Ah, but consider, if my uncle should surprise me!

Bet. Consider, the door's open, Madam.

Fri. Nothing but delay can ruin us.

Flo. O dear, I'm in a thousand frights!

Bet. This is downright provoking! Sir, since you see there's no hopes of my lady, if you can settle the least tip of your heart upon her humble servant, I'll be over the wall in a twinkling.

Flo. Hold, hold; rather than you should break your neck, I will venture—Well, here I am; I tremble every joint of me; now, whither will you carry me? [*They come down.*

Fri. To a doctor that shall cure thee of all fears for ever—To the parson, the parson, my dear angel.

Flo. O Lord! but if he should not be at home now!

Bet. What should we do for something to be afraid of?

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AIR XXI. *Ranting, roaring Billy.*

'Thus maidens belie their desires,
'Yet languish for what they refuse;
'And tho' their breasts glow with love's fires,
'Seem cold to the joys they would choose.
'The tongue and the heart are two factions
'We scarce reconcile till made brides;
'Like statesmen, our speeches and actions
'Have commonly contrary sides. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sir THOMAS.

Sir Tho. There, you rustic rogues, you hard-headed dogs, I think I've at last met with your skulls ——I believe I have notch'd some of your noddles for you——Heyday! the garden-door open, and my niece gone!—My mind misgives me consumedly—— Niece! Betty! Thieves! Robbery! Murder! Lost! Not to be found!

Enter FRIENDLY'S SERVANT.

Ser. So, here he is, and I must bam him till the business is over.

Sir Tho. Thieves! Thieves!

Ser. Pray, Sir, what's the matter?

Sir Tho. Óons, Sir, let me go, or I'll run my sword into your guts.

Ser. I am afraid your brain's something out of order; and therefore 'twill be a friendly part in me to take care of you.

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Sir Tho. Blood and thunder! you dog, get out of my way, or I'll——

Ser. Nay, then——— [*Presenting a pistol.*

'AIR XXII. *Stand, who comes there?*

'Stand; have a care.
'Stand; have a care.
'One step to move,
'Will fatal prove;
'For I know who you are.'

Come, Sir, make your thrust——

Sir Tho. What the devil are you, Sir?

Ser. A philosopher; and this small pop is my argument.

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, I believe you're a highwayman, and your pop there is your livelihood.

Ser. Sir, you may be as scurrilous as you please, provided you don't pass this way.

Sir Tho. 'Sdeath, Sir, what business have you to hinder me?

Ser. Sir, I have no business at present but to hinder you.

Sir Tho. But pray, Sir, how comes it to be your business?

Ser. Because, Sir, 'tis my business to do my master's business; and I have some modest reason to believe that he and the parson are now doing your niece's business.

Sir Tho. The devil! Murder! where are they, villain?

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Ser. Pray, Sir, compose yourself, for they are here.

Enter FRIENDLY, FLORA, *and* BETTY.

Fri. Your blessing, Sir.

Ser. Does not that show a sweet temper in him now, to ask it of you, that are but his bare uncle?

Sir Tho. I am struck all of a heap, and dumb.

Ser. Come, Sir, don't be as obstinate as an old coveteous father at the end of a comedy; consider, the main action's over, you had as good be reconcil'd.

Sir Tho. Oons, Sir, I can't be reconcil'd.

[*Exit Sir Tho.*

Ser. Go thy ways, like a cross-grain'd old fool.

Fri. Let him persist in his obstinacy, it can be no bar to our happiness. You look melancholy, my love.

Flo. 'I think I've reason—You promis'd to carry 'me to a doctor that should cure me of my fears. 'But, on the contrary, I find that the malady in-'creases; and in nothing more than the dread of your inconstancy.' I have for ever lost my uncle's favour, and have now no friend but you——Shou'd you hereafter estrange your heart from me, I am wretched indeed—'Reflect on what I've said, excuse 'my suspicions; and remember there is no return of 'seasons in love.

'AIR XXIII. *'Twas on a sunshine summer's day.*

'*Flo.* Sweet is the budding spring of love—
'Next, blooming hopes all fears remove;
'And when possess'd of beauty's charms,
'Fruition, like the summer, warms.

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' But pleasures, oft repeated, cloy;
' To autumn wanes the fleeting joy;
' Declining till desires are lost——
' Succeeded by eternal frost.
' Succeeded, &c.

Fri. Banish those fears, and be assured they are groundless——Dick——

Ser. Sir.

Fri. Run, and call our country neighbours back again to their diversions, in which they were interrupted by Sir Thomas; tell them they shall be merry with me to-day, to make them amends for being frightened. (*Exit. Dick.*) 'Twas a happy interruption, for it gave us an opportunity to be for ever fix'd in love.—Look merry, my dear.

Flo. My concern vanishes, now I've disclos'd my fears, and cheerfulness will soon resume its throne.

Fri. You shall never have cause to mention those fears again——

Flo. It is easy to talk thus now; but the difficulty will be to speak these sentiments, with truth, a year hence. However, as I have run all hazards for you, honour will oblige you to conceal your inconstancy from me—shou'd you be guilty of it.

AIR XXIV. *Red House. Duetto.*

Flo. Let me not discover
In thee a faithless lover,
Fri. I'll never prove a rover;
But true as a turtle to thee, my dear.

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Flo. Love prompts me to believe thee;
Do not then deceive me.
Fri. My conduct ne'er shall grieve thee,
Let this suffice; my heart's sincere.
Flo.——Let our lives be spent——.
Fri.——In merriment;
Flo. With the sweet cement—
Fri. Of soft content.
Flo. May our joys augment—
Fri.——May no dire event—
Both.————Disturb our mutual pleasure.

Enter DICK, HOB, *and* COUNTRY-FOLKS.

Hob. Is Sir Tomas gone?

Fri. Ay, Hob, come in; what art afraid of?

Hob. 'Sblead, I was woundily afraid of's zward; had he kept to stick, I'd thrash 'en to mummy.

Fri. I'm sorry, neighbours, Sir Thomas's passionate folly disturb'd your sports one way; I'll endeavour to make you all satisfaction; this is my wedding day, and consequently a day of jubilee.

Coun. We wish you joy, Master Friendly and Mistress——

Hob. I wish ye joy too. But when I was zopp'd i' th' well, I little thought I should live to tell you zo.

Fri. Hob, thou shalt laugh at thy danger, now 'tis over.——Come, 'we'll have a song and dance, and' haste to my dwelling, and finish the day with mirth and hearty cheer: The night I'll dedicate to love and thee.

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AIR XXV. *Friendly.*

Success this day has gain'd me possession
Of what I love much dearer than life:
The coming night shall give me fruition
Of all I can wish in a lovely wife.
To enjoy the sweets the country affords,
Who would not forego the servile flattery of courts?
To hunt, fish, and fowl,
And taste the full bowl,
There is nothing so healthful as rural sports.

CHORUS.

Now from envy free,
All friends loyally
Supplicate with me,
Our guardian divinity,
To bless the king and queen, and royal progeny.
Send us peace, trade's increase, health and prosperity.
May Cupid's darts strike sure,
But be the cause the cure!
In virtuous deeds delight—
Happy all unite
In friendship and love.

[*A dance, and exeunt.*

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Mrs. MARTYR.

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Printed for J. Parsons 21 Paternoster Row. Jan.y 1794.

5

THE DEUCE IS IN HIM.

A F A R C E,

IN TWO ACTS.

WRITTEN BY GEORGE COLEMAN, ESQ.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES ROYAL DRURY LANE AND HAY-MARKET.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

London:

PRINTED BY J. JARVIS,

FOR J. PARSONS, No 21, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1794.

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THE DEUCE IS IN HIM.

IN the season of 1763, this very elegant and lively After-piece, which reflects so much credit on the mind and invention of the Elder Colman, was represented, for the first time, before an audience at once numerous and brilliant, at Drury Lane Theatre; and never was applause more general or more completely earned. The hero of the scene being made the dupe of that artifice which suspicion had prompted him to have recourse to, is an admirable instance of the richness of the author's conception, and of his perfect knowledge of true stage effect.

It has been imagined by a modern writer, that Mr. Coleman has availed himself, in his fable, of the Episode *of Lindor, in the impressive fictions of the moralist Marmontel; but the idea is surely far fetched, if not entirely void of foundation.*

To suspect the integrity of a valuable and deserving object without just grounds, is unworthy of a man who has won upon the affections of a valuable and generous heart. Ingratitude, here, assumes its darkest hue; and here, satire is called upon to prepare its keenest dart to effect the reform of those who are unmanly enough to pain, by unjust suspicion, the chaste bosom of honour and of love.

To obey the call has been the task of our excellent dramatist, and in its execution he has given us fresh cause to exclaim with the bard he loved,

" O! what a noble mind is here o'erturn'd."

Dramatis Personæ.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

Col. Tamper,	Mr. Palmer
Prattle,	Mr. Baddeley
Major Belford,	Mr. Whitfield.

Women.

Emily,	Mrs. Goodall
Bell,	Miss Collins
Mademoiselle Florival,	Miss Heard.

HAY-MARKET.

Men.

Col. Tamper,	Mr. Palmer
Prattle,	Mr. Baddeley
Major Belford,	Mr. Evatt.

Women.

Emily,	Mrs. Goodall
Bell,	Mrs. Taylor
Mademoiselle Florival,	Miss Heard.

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PROLOGUE.

THE deuce is in him! What the deuce
(I hear you cry) can that produce?
What does it mean? what can it be?
A little patience——and you'll see.
Behold, to keep your minds uncertain,
Between the scene and you,——this curtain!
So writers hide their plots, no doubt,
To please the more when all comes out!
Of old the Prologue told the story,
And laid the whole affair before ye;
Came forth in simple phrase to say,
"'Fore the beginning of the play*,
"I, hapless Polydore, was found
"By fishermen, or others, drown'd!
"Or——I a gentleman did wed
"The lady I would never bed,
"Great Agamemnon's royal daughter,
"Who's coming hither——to draw water."
Thus gave at once the bards of Greece
The cream and marrow of the piece;
Asking no trouble of your own
To skim the milk, or crack the bone.
The poets now take diff'rent ways:
E'en let them find it out for Bayes!

* The lines marked with inverted commas, are taken from a poem called Shakespeare, an epistle to Mr. Garrick. See *Lloyd's Poems*, p. 57.

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And Tragedy as well might swagger
Without blank verse, or bowl, or dagger,
As Farce attempt the arduous task,
To walk abroad without her mask.
A poet, as once poets us'd,
To poverty was quite reduc'd.
No boy on errands to be sent,
On his own messages he went.
And once, with conscious pride and shame,
As from the chandler's-shop he came,
Under his thread-bare cloak, poor soul!
He cover'd——half a-peck of coal.
A Wag (*his friend*) began to smoke;
——George! tell us, what's beneath your cloak?
——Tell you! it were as well to show——
I hid it——that you shou'd not know.
Yet Farce and Title, one to t'other
Shou'd seem, like Sosias, a Twin-brother.
Prologues, like Andrews at a fair,
To draw you in, shou'd make you stare.
"The notified! the only Booth!——Walk in!
"Gem'men, in here! just going to begin!"
And if our author don't produce
Some character that *plays the deuce*;
If there's no frolic, sense, nor whim,
Retort, and play the dev'l with him!

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THE DEUCE IS IN HIM.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Emily's House.*

Enter EMILY *with a letter open in her hand—and Mademoiselle* FLORIVAL *in man's cloaths.*

Emily.

BE assured, that I will do every thing in my power to serve you; my brother knew that he might command my service—Be comforted, I beseech you, Madam.

Flo. You cannot wonder, Madam, that I should be shocked, extremely shocked, at the cruel necessity of appearing before you in so indelicate a disguise.

Em. Indeed you need not: there is something in your manner, which convinces me, that every action of your life carries its apology along with it; though I will not venture to inquire into the particulars of your story till your mind is more at ease.

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Flo. Alas, Madam, it is my interest to make you acquainted with my story. I am the daughter of Monsieur Florival, a French physician, in the island of Belleisle. An English officer, who had been desperately wounded, was, after the capitulation, for the sake of due attendance, taken into my father's house; and as I, in the very early part of my life, had resided in England, he took some pleasure in my conversation. In a word, he won my affections, and asked me of my father in marriage: but he, alas! too much influenced by the narrow prejudices so common between the two nations, forbad the officer his house, but not before we were, by the most solemn engagements, secretly contracted to each other.

Em. May I ask the officer's name?

Flo. Excuse me, Madam. Till I see or hear from him once more, my prudence, vanity, or call it what you will, will scarce suffer me to mention it. Your brother, indeed, is acquainted with——

Em. I beg your pardon——I hope, however, you have no reason to think yourself neglected or forgotten?

Flo. Oh no; far from it. He was soon recalled by orders from England; and on my father's pressing me to consent to another match, my passion—— I blush to own it——transported me so far, as to depart abruptly from Belleisle. I came over in an English ship to Portsmouth, where I expected according to letters he had contrived to send me, to find the officer. But, judge of my disappointment, when

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I learnt that he embarked but three days before for the siege of the Havannah.

Em. The Havannah!—You touch me nearly—— Pray go on.

Flo. In a strange kingdom—alone—and a woman—what could I do? In order to defeat inquiries after me, I disguis'd myself in this habit, and mixt with the officers of the place; but your brother soon discovered my uneasiness, and saw through my disguise. I frankly confessed to him every particular of my story: in consequence of which, he has thus generously recommended me to your protection.

Em. And you may depend on my friendship.—— Your situation affects me strangely.

Flo. Oh, Madam, it is impossible to tell you half its miseries; especially since your brother has convinced me that I am so liable to be discovered.

Em. You shall throw off that dress as soon as possible, and then I will take you into the house with me and my sister——In the mean time, let me see you every day—every hour. I shall not be afraid that your visits will affect my reputation.

Flo. You are too good to me. [*Weeping.*

Em. Nay, this is too much; it overcomes me. Pray, be cheerful.

Flo. I humbly take my leave.

Em. Adieu. I shall expect you to dinner.

Flo. I shall do myself the honour of waiting on you. [*Exit.*

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Em. (alone.) Poor woman! I thought my own uneasiness almost insupportable; and yet, how much must her anxiety exceed mine!

Enter BELL.

Bell. So, sister! I met your fine gentleman. Upon my word, the young spark must be a favourite — You have had a *tête-à-tête* of above half an hour together.

Em. How d'ye like him?

Bell. Not at all: a soft lady-like gentleman, with a white hand, a mincing step, and a smooth chin. Where does this pretty master come from?

Em. From my brother.

Bell. Who is he?

Em. A present to you.

Bell. A present to me! what d'ye mean?

Em. Why, did not my brother promise to tak care of you before he went abroad?

Bell. Well, and what then?

Em. What then! Why, he has taken care of you—sent you a pretty fellow for a husband—Could he possibly take better care of you?

Bell. A husband!—a puppet, a doll, a——

Em. A soldier, Bell!—a red coat, consider.

Bell. A fine soldier indeed!——I can't bear to see a red coat cover any thing but a man, sister.—Give me a soldier that looks as if he cou'd love me and protect me; ay, and tame me too, if I deserv'd it.—If I was to have this thing for a husband, I wou'd set

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him at the top of my India cabinet with the China figures, and bid the maid take care she did not break him.

Em. Well, well; if this is the case, I don't know what my brother will say to you. Here's his letter; read it, and send him an answer yourself.

Bell. (reads.) "Dear sister, the bearer of this letter is a lady!"—So, so! your servant, Madam!—and yours too, sister!—"whose case is truly compassionate, and whom I most earnestly recommend to your protection,"—Um—um—um—"take care of her"——Um—um—um—"not too many questions"—Um—um—um—"in town in a few days."—I'll be whipt now, if this is not some mistress of his.

Em. No, no. Bell, I know her whole history. It is quite a little novel. She is a Frenchwoman, Mademoiselle Florival, run away from her father at Belleisle, and dying for an English gentleman at the Havannah.

Bel. The Havannah!——Not for Colonel Tamper, I hope, sister.

Em. If Colonel Tamper had been at the taking of Belleisle too, I should have been frighten'd out of my wits about it.

Bell. Suppose I should bring you some news of him?

Em. Of whom?

Bell. Colonel Tamper.

Em. What do you mean?

Bell. Only a card.

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Em. A card!—from whom? What card?

Bell. Oh, what a delightful flutter it puts her into!

Em. Nay, but tell me.

Bell. Well then——while your visitor was here, there came a card from Major Belford; and I took the liberty of sending an answer to it.

Em. Let me see it! Dear Bell, let me see it!

Bell. Oh. it was nothing but "his compliments, "and desiring to have the honour of waiting on you "any time this morning from Colonel Tamper."

Em. From Colonel Tamper!—What can this mean? I am ready to sink with fear——Why does he not come himself?

Bell. He's not arrived—not come to town yet, I suppose.

Em. Oh, Bell! I could suppose twenty things that terrify me to death.

Bell. I think now, such a message ought to put you quite out of your pain: he could not come from Colonel Tamper, if there was no such person in being.

Em. Ay, but suppose any accident should have happened to him! Heaven forbid! How unfortunate it is to doat upon a man, whose profession exposes him hourly to the risk of his life!

Bell. Lord, Emily, how can you torment yourself with such horrid imaginations? Besides, should the worst come to the worst—it is but a lover lost; and that is a loss easily repaired, you know.

Em. Go, you mad-cap! but you'll pay for all this one day, I warrant you. When you come to be

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heartily in for it yourself, Bell, you will know, that when a pure and disinterested passion fills the breast, when once a woman has set her heart upon a man, nothing in the world but that very man will ever make her happy.

Bell. I admire your *setting your heart*, as you call it, of all things. Your love, my dear Emily, is not so romantic. You pitch upon a man of figure and fortune, handsome, sensible, good-natured, and well-bred; of rank in life, and credit in his profession; a man that half the women in town would pull caps for; and then you talk, like a sly prude, of your pure and disinterested passion.

Em. Why, then, I declare, if he had not a friend on earth, or a shilling in the world——if he was as miserable as the utmost malice of ill fortune could make him, I would prefer Colonel Tamper to the first duke in the kingdom.

Bell. Oh, sister, it is a mighty easy thing for persons rolling in affluence and a coach-and-six, to talk of living on bread and water, and the comforts of love in a cottage.

Em. The coach-and-six, Bell, would give little happiness to those who could not be happy without it. When once the heart has settled its affections, how mean is it to withdraw them for any paltry considerations of what nature soever!

Bell. "I think the lady doth protest too much,

Em. "Ay, but she'll keep her word."

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Enter SERVANT,

Ser. Major Belford, Madam! [*Exit.*

Em. Show him in——Oh, Bell, I am ready to drop with apprehension!

Enter Major BELFORD,

Belf. Ladies, your humble servant——(*Salutes them*). I rejoice to find you so well.

Bell. And we congratulate you, Major, on your safe return from the Havannah——How does your friend Colonel Tamper do?

Belf. He is very well, Madam; but——

Em. But what, Sir——I am frighted beyond expression——Is he in England?

Belf. Yes, Madam.

Em. In town?

Belf. Yes, Madam.

Em. Why have not we the pleasure of seeing him then?

Belf. He'll be here immediately, Madam.

Em. Oh, well.

Belf. But it was thought proper that I should wait on you first, to prepare you for his reception.

Em. To prepare me! What does he mean?

Belf. Only to prevent your being alarmed at his appearance, Madam.

Em. Alarm'd! you terrify me more and more—What is the matter?

Belf. Nay, nothing——A trifle—the mere chance of war—*la fortune de la guerre*, as the French call it; that's all, Madam.

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Em. I'm upon the rack—Dear Sir, explain—

Belf. The Colonel, you know, Madam, is a man of spirit—Having exposed his person very gallantly in the several actions before the town of the Havannah, he received many wounds; one or two of which have been attended with rather disagreeable circumstances.

Em. But is the Colonel well at present, Sir?

Belf. Extremely well, Madam.

Em. Are not the consequences of his wounds likely to endanger his life?

Belf. Not in the least, Madam.

Em. I am satisfied——Pray go on, Sir.

Belf. Do not you be alarmed, Madam.

Em. Keep me no longer in suspence, I beseech you, Sir!

Bell. What can all this mean?

Belf. The two principal wounds which the Colonel received, Madam, were, one a little above the knee, and another in his face. In consequence of the first, he was reduced to the necessity of saving his life by the loss of a leg; and the latter has deprived him of the sight of an eye.

Em. Oh, heavens! [*Ready to faint.*

Bell. Poor Emily! How could you be so abrupt, Sir? The violent agitation of her mind is too much for her spirits.

Belf. Excuse me, Madam——I was afraid of making you uneasy; and yet it was necessary you should be acquainted with these circumstances, previous to your seeing the Colonel.

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Em. (recovering.) Lost a leg and an arm, did you say, Sir?

Belf. No, not an arm—an eye, Madam.

Em. An eye: worse and worse—Poor Colonel!

Belf. Rather unfortunate, to be sure. But we should consider, Madam, that we have saved his life; and these were sacrifices necessary for its preservation.

Em. Very true. Ay—ay—so as he has but his life, I am happy. And I ought now to be attached to him, not only from tenderness, but compassion.

Belf. After all, Madam, his appearance is much better than you may imagine. His face, by the help of a black ribband, is very little disfigured; and he has got a false leg, made so naturally, that except a small hitch in his gait, there is no material alteration in his person and deportment—Besides which, in point of health and spirits, he is particularly well.

Em. I am glad of it.——But, alas! he whose person was so charming!——And then his eyes, that were so brilliant!—so full of sensibility!

Belf. This accident, Madam, on his own account gives him no uneasiness; to say the truth, he seems rather vain upon it: I could wish, therefore, when he comes, that you would not seem too deeply affected, but rather assume an air of cheerfulness, lest any visible uneasiness in you should shock the Colonel.

Em. Poor Colonel! I know his sensibility. Let me *endeavour*, therefore, to convince him, that he

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is as dear to me as ever! Oh, yes, *cost me what it will*, I must show him, that the preservation of his life is an entire *consolation* to me.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Colonel Tamper, Madam.

Em. Eh! what? [*Disordered.*

Bell. Desire the Colonel to walk up—Compose yourself, my dear!—Poor Emily! I am in pain for her. [*Aside.*

Enter Colonel TAMPER—*Runs up to Emily.*

Tam. My dearest Emily!—how happy am I to see you once again! I have brought back the honest heart and hand which I devoted to you: as to the rest of my body, you see I did not care sixpence what became of it. Miss Bell, I rejoice to see you so well.—Major, I am yours—But my Emily——

Em. Oh, Colonel!

[*Bursts into tears, and leans upon Bell.*

Tam. How's this? Tears!

Bell. You should not have followed the Major so soon, Colonel; she had scarce recovered the first shock from his intelligence.

Tam. My impatience would suffer me to delay no longer——Why do you weep so, Emily?—Are you sorry to see me again?

Em. Sorry to see you unfortunate. [*Weeping.*

Tam. Unfortunate! call me rather fortunate; I am come back alive; alive and merry, Emily.

Em. I am glad you have saved your life. [*Weeping.*

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Tam. I dare say you are. Look on me then. What, not one glance! Won't you deign to look on your poor maimed soldier? *(Pausing.)*—Is it possible, then, that any little alteration of my person can occasion a change in your sentiments?

Em. Never, Colonel, never: It is surely no mark of want of affection to be so much hurt at your misfortunes.

Tam. Misfortunes! no misfortunes at all—none at all to a soldier—nothing but the ordinary incidents and common casualties of his life—marks of honour—and tokens of valour—I declare I bear them about with me as the most honourable badges of my profession—I am proud of them—I would not part with this wooden leg for the best flesh and blood in Christendom.

Em. And can you really be so unconcerned at this accident?

Tam. Really; and you shall be unconcerned too, Emily. You shall find more in me still, than in half the battered rakes and fops about town. It injures me no more than it does a fine tree, to lop my branches. My trunk is heart of oak, and I shall thrive the better for it.

Em. But is there no hope of recovering your eye again? Oh, we must have the best advice——Is the sight quite lost?

Tam. Quite——Blind as a mill-horse——blind as a beetle, Emily——But what does that signify? Love is blind, you know; and if I have lost one eye, why, they say, I shall see the clearer with the other.

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Em. I cannot look at him without shuddering.

[*Retires and sits down.*

Bell. What action was it you suffered in, Colonel?

Tam. Before the Moro Castle, Ma'am, before the Moro——Hot work, hissing hot, by sea and land, I assure you, Ma'am. Ah, the Moro, the Moro!—But if men go to run their heads against stone-walls, they must expect to have a sconce or two broken before they make their way through them——Eh, Major!

Bell. Major Belford was with you?

Tam. All the while. The Major and I fought side by side, cheek by jowl, till I fell, Ma'am! We paid the Dons—didn't we, Major?——But Velasco, poor Velasco! A fine brave Don, must be owned—I had rather have died like Velasco, than have lived to be Generalissimo.

Bell. (to Emily.) How are you, sister?

Tam. Nay, prithee, Emily, be comforted! more than all this might have happened to me at home. I might have thrown away my life in a duel, or broke my neck in a fox-chace: a fit of the gout, or an apoplexy, might have maimed me ten times worse for ever; or a palsy, perhaps, have killed one half of me at a single stroke—You must not take on thus—If you do, I shall be extremely uneasy.

Em. Excuse me, I cannot help it—but be assured, I esteem you as much as ever, Sir.

Tam. Esteem and *Sir!*——This is cold language—I have not been used to hear you talk in that style, Emily.

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Em. I don't know what I say—I am not well—let me retire.

Tam. When shall we name the happy day? I shall make shift to dance on that occasion—though as Withrington fought—on my stumps, Emily. Tell me, when shall we be happy?

Em. I grow more and more faint——Lead me to my chamber, Bell.

Bell. She is very ill—don't tease her now, Colonel; but let us try to procure her some repose.

Tam. Ay, ay, a short sleep and a little reflection, and all will be well, I dare say——I will be here again soon, and administer consolation, I warrant you. Adieu, my dear Emily.

Em. Adieu.—Oh, Bell. [*Exit in tears with Bell.*

[*Manent Major Belford and Col. Tamper.*

Tam. (*assuming his natural air and manner*) Ha, ha, ha!—Well, Belford, what is your opinion now? Will she stand the test or no?

Belf. If she does, it is more than you deserve. I could wish she would give you up with all my heart, if I did not think you would run stark mad with vexation.

Tam. Why so?

Belf. Because, as I have often told you before, this is a most absurd and ridiculous scheme, a mere trick to impose upon yourself, and most probably end in your losing the the affections of an amiable lady.

Tam. You know, Belford, there is an excess of sensibility in my temper——

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Belf. That will always make you unhappy.

Tam. Rather say it will ensure the future happiness of my life. Before I bind myself to abide by a woman at all events and in all circumstances, I must be assured that she will at all events and in all circumstances retain her affection for me.

Belf. 'Sdeath, I have no patience to hear you. Have not you all the reason in the world to rest assured that Emily entertains a most sincere passion for you?

Tam. Perhaps so; but then I am not equally assured of the basis on which that passion is founded.

Belf. Her folly, I am afraid.

Tam. Nay, but I am serious, Major.

Belf. You are very ridiculous, Colonel.

Tam. Well, well; it does not signify talking: I must be convinced that she loves me for my own sake, for myself alone; and that, were I divested of every desirable gift of fortune and of nature, and she was to be addressed by fifty others who possessed them all in the most eminent degree, she would continue to prefer me to all the rest of mankind.

'*Belf.* Most precious refinement, truly! This is 'the most high-flown metaphysics in sentiment I 'ever heard in my life—picked up in one of your 'expeditions to the coast of France, I suppose— 'No plain Englishman ever dream'd of such a whim '—Love you for *yourself!* for *your own sake!*—not 'she truly.

'*Tam.* How then?

Belf. Why, for her *own*, to be sure—and so

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'would any body else.—I am your friend, and love 'you as a friend: And why? because I am glad to 'have commerce with a man of talents, honour, and 'honesty. Let me once see you behave like a pol-'troon or a villain, and you know I would cut your 'throat, Colonel!

'*Tam.* I don't doubt you, Major; but if she don't 'love me for my *own* sake, for *myself*, as I said, 'how can I ever be certain that she will not transfer 'that love to another?

Belf. 'For your *own* sake! for *yourself* again!'—Why, what, in the name of common sense, is this *self* of yours, that you make such a rout about? Your birth, your fortune, your character, your talents, and perhaps, sweet Colonel, that sweet person of yours—all these may have taken her—and habitude, and continual intercourse, must increase her partiality for them in you, more than in any other person. But, after all, 'none of these things are '*yourself*. You are but the ground; and these qua-'lities are woven into your frame. Yet it is not 'the stuff, but the richness of the work, that stamps 'a value on the piece.

'*Tam.* Why, this is downright sermonizing, Ma-'jor. Give you pudding-sleeves and a grizzle-'wig, you might be chaplain to the regiment. Yet 'matrimony is a leap in the dark indeed, if we can-'not beforehand make ourselves at all certain of the 'fidelity and affection of our wives.

'*Belf.* Marriage is precarious, I grant you, and 'must be so. You may play like a wary gamester,

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'tis true. I would not marry a notorious profligate, nor a woman in a consumption; but' there is no more answering for the continuance of her good disposition, than that of her good health.

Tam. Fine maxims! make use of them yourself; they won't serve me. A fine time, indeed, to experience a woman's fidelity—after marriage; a time when every thing conspires to render it her interest to deceive you! No, no; no fool's paradise for me, Belford!

Belf. A fool's paradise is better than a wiseacre's purgatory.

Tam. 'Sdeath, Belford, who comes here?—I shall be discovered. [*Resuming his counterfeit manner.*

Enter PRATTLE.

Prat. Gentlemen, your most obedient; mighty sorry, extremely concerned, to hear the lady's taken ill——I was sent for in a violent hurry—had forty patients to visit—resolved to see her, however—— Major Belford, I rejoice to see you in good health —Have I the honour of knowing this gentleman?

[*Pointing to Tamper, and going up to him.*

Tam. Hum, hum!

[*Limping away from Prattle, and putting his handkerchief to his face.*

Belf. An acquaintance of mine, Mr. Prattle.—You don't know him, I believe——A little hurt in the service—that's all.

Prat. Accidents, accidents will happen—No less than seven brought into our infirmary yesterday, and

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ten into the hospital——Did you hear, Major Belford, that poor Lady Di. Racket broke her arm last night, by an overturn, from her horses taking fright among the vast crowd of coaches getting in at Lady Thunder's rout; and yesterday morning, Sir Helter Skelter, who is so remarkably fond of driving, put out his collar-bone by a fall from his own coach-box.

Tam. Pox on his chattering! I wish he'd be gone! [*Apart to Belford.*

Belf. But your fair patient, Mr. Prattle——I am afraid we detain you.

Prat. Not at all;—I'll attend her immediately—(*Going, returns.*)——You have not heard of the change in the ministry?

Tam. Psha!

Belf. I have.

Prat. Well, well—(*Going, returns.*)—Lady Sarah Melvile brought to-bed within these two hours—a boy——Gentlemen, your servant, your very humble servant. [*Exit.*

Tam. Chattering jackanapes.

Belf. So, the apothecary's come already—we shall have a consultation of physicians, the knocker tied up, and straw laid in the street shortly.——But are not you ashamed, Tamper, to give her all this uneasiness?

Tam. No matter—I'll make her ample amends at last—What could possess them to send for this blockhead? He'll make her worse and worse—He will absolutely talk her to death.

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Belf. Oh, the puppy's in fashion, you know.

Tam. It is lucky enough the fellow did not know me. He's a downright he-gossip!—and any thing he knows might as well be published in The Daily Advertiser. But come, for fear of discovery, we had better decamp for the present. March!

Belf. You'll expose yourself confoundedly, Tamper.

Tam. Say no more. I am resolv'd to put her affection to the trial. If she's thorough proof, I'm made for ever. Come along. [*Going*

Belf. Tamper!

Tam. Oh, I am lame—I forgot. [*Limping.*

Belf. Lord, Lord! what a fool self-love makes of a man! [*Exeunt.*

THE END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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ACT II.

SCENE—Emily's Dressing-room.

EMILY, BELL, PRATTLE, *sitting on a sofa.*

Bell.

I THINK you seem to be a good deal recovered, Emily.

Em. I am much better than I was, I thank you ——Heigh-ho!

Prat. Ay, ay, I knew we should be better by and by——These little nervous disorders are very common all over the town——merely owing to the damp weather, which relaxes the tone of the whole system. —The poor Duchess of Porcelain has had a fever on her spirits these three weeks—Lady Teaser's case is absolutely hysterical; and Lady Betty Dawdle is almost half mad with lowness of spirits, headaches, tremblings, vain fears, and wanderings of the mind.

Em. Pray, Mr. Prattle, how does poor Miss Crompton do?

Prat. Never better, Ma'am.—Somebody has removed her disorder, by prescribing very effectually to the Marquis of Cranford. His intended match with Miss Richman, the hundred thousand pound fortune, is quite off; and so, Ma'am, Miss Compton is perfectly well again——By the bye too, she has

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another reason to rejoice: for her cousin, Miss Dorothy, who lives with her, and began, you know, to grow rather old-maidish, as we say, Ma'am, made a sudden conquest of Mr. Bumper, a Lancashire gentleman of a great estate, who came up to town for the Christmas; and they were married at Miss Crompton's yesterday evening.

Bell. Is it true, Mr. Prattle, that Sir John Medley is going to the south of France for the recovery of his health?

Prat. Very true, Ma'am, very true, that he's going, I promise you; but not for the recovery of his health. Sir John's well enough himself—but his affairs are in a galloping consumption, I assure you. No less than two executions in his house. I heard it for fact at Lady Modish's. Poor gentleman, I have known his chariot stand at Arthur's till eight o'clock in the morning. He has had a sad run a long time; but that last affair at Newmarket totally undid him.——Pray, Ladies, have you heard the story of Alderman Manchester's lady?

Bell. Oh, no. Pray, what is it?

Prat. A terrible story indeed——Eloped from her husband, and went off with Lord John Sprightly. Their intention, it seems, was to go over to Holland; but the Alderman pursued them to Harwich, and catched them just as they were going to embark. He threatened Lord John with a prosecution: but Lord John, who knew the Alderman's turn, came down with a thousand pounds; and so the Alderman received his wife, and all is well again.

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Bell. I vow, Mr. Prattle, you are extremely amusing. You know the chit-chat of the whole town.

Prat. Can't avoid picking up a few slight anecdotes, to be sure, Ma'am—Go into the best houses in town—attend the first families in the kingdom—nobody better received—nobody takes more care—nobody tries to give more satisfaction.

Bell. Is there any public news of any kind, Mr. Prattle?

Prat. None at all, Ma'am——except that the officers are most of them return'd from the Havannah.

Em. So we hear, Sir!

Prat. I saw Colonel Tamper yesterday. O, ay! and Major Belford, and another gentleman, as I came in here this morning.

Bell. That was Colonel Tamper, Sir.

Prat. That gentleman, Colonel Tamper; Ma'am!

Bell. Yes, Sir.

Prat. Pardon me, Ma'am! I know Colonel Tamper very well.—That poor gentleman was somewhat disabled—had suffered a little in the wars—Colonel Tamper is not so unfortunate.

Em. O yes, that horrid accident!

Prat. What accident?

Bell. His wounds—his wounds——Don't you know, Sir?

Prat. Wounds, Ma'am!—Upon my word I never heard he had received any.

Bell. No! Why he lost a leg and an eye at the siege of the Havannah.

Prat. Did he? Why then, Ma'am, I'll be bold to say, he is the luckiest man in the world.

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Bell. Why so, Sir?

Prat. Because, Ma'am, if he lost a leg and an eye at the Havannah, they must be grown again, or he has somehow procured others that do the business every whit as well.

Em. Impossible!

Prat. I wish I may die, Ma'am, if the Colonel had not yesterday two as good legs and fine eyes as any man in the world. If he lost one of each at the Havannah, we practitioners in physic should be much obliged to him to communicate his receipt for the benefit of Greenwich and Chelsea hospitals.

Em. Are you sure that the Colonel has had no such loss, Sir?

Prat. As sure as that I am here, Ma'am! I saw him going into the what-d'ye-call-him ambassador's, just over against my house, yesterday; and the last place I was at this morning was Mrs. Daylight's, where I heard the Colonel was at her route last night, and that every body thought he was rather improved than injured by his late expedition.—But, odso! Lack-a-day, lack-a-day, lack-a-day!—now I recollect—ha, ha, ha! [*Laughing very heartily.*

Bell. What's the matter, Mr. Prattle?

Prat. Excuse me, ladies: I can't forbear laughing—ha, ha, ha!—The gentleman in t'other room, Colonel Tamper! ha, ha, ha!——I find the Colonel had a mind to pay a visit in masquerade this morning——I spoke to Major Belford——I thought I knew his friend too——but he limped away, and hid his face, and would not speak to me.——Upon my

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word, he did it very well! I could have sworn there had been an amputation—He would make a figure at a masked ball. Ha, ha, ha!

Em. Bell. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Looking at each other, and affecting to laugh.*

Prat. Ha, ha, ha! very comical! Ha, ha, ha!

Bell. A frolic, Mr. Prattle, a frolic: I think, however, you had better not take any notice of it abroad.

Prat. Me! I shall never breathe it, Ma'am: I am close as oak—an absolute free-mason for secrecy ——But, Ma'am, *(rising)*, I must bid you good morning——I have several patients to visit before dinner.——Mrs. Tremor, I know, will be dying with the vapours till she sees me; and I am to meet Dr. Valerian at Lord Hectic's in less than half an hour.

Em. Ring the bell, my dear——Mr. Prattle, your servant.

Prat. Ladies, your very humble servant.—I shall send you a cordial mixture, Ma'am, to be taken in any particular faintness, or lowness of spirits; and some draughts for morning and evening. Have a care of catching cold, be cautious in your diet, and I make no doubt but in a few days we shall be perfectly recovered.—Ladies, your servant: Your most obedient, very humble servant. [*Exit.*

[*The ladies sit for some time silent.*

Bell. (After a pause.) Sister Emily!

Em. Sister Bell!

Bell. What d'ye think of Colonel Tamper now, sister?

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Em. Why, I am so provoked, and so pleased; so angry, and so diverted; that I don't know whether I should be in, or out of humour, at this discovery.

Bell. No!—Is it possible you can have so little spirit? This tattling apothecary will tell this fine story at every house he goes into—it will be town-talk—If a lover of mine had attempted to put such an impudent deceit upon me, I would never see his face again.

Em. If you had a lover that you liked, Bell, you would not be quite so violent.

Bell. Indeed but I should. What! to come here with a Canterbury tale of a leg and an eye, and heaven knows what, merely to try the extent of his power over you—'To gratify his inordinate vanity, 'in case you should retain your affection for him; 'or to reproach you for your weakness and infidelity, 'if you could not reconcile yourself to him on that 'supposition.'

Em. It is abominably provoking, I own; and yet, Bell, it is not a quarter of an hour ago, but I would have parted with half my fortune to have made it certain that there was a trick in the story.

Bell. Well, I never knew one of these men of extraordinary sense, as they are called, that was not in some instances a greater fool than the rest of mankind.

Em. After all, Bell, I must confess that this stratagem has convinced me of the infirmity of my temper. This supposed accident began to make strange work with me.

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Bell. I saw that plain enough. I told you what your pure and disinterested passion, sister, would come to, long ago.—Yet this is so flagrant an affront, I would make him smart for it some way or other; I would not marry him these seven years.

Em. That, perhaps, might be punishing myself, sister.

Bell. We must plague him, and heartily too. Oh, for a bright thought now, some charming invention to torment him!

Em. Oh, as to that matter, I should be glad to have some comical revenge on him with all my heart.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Captain Johnson, Ma'am.

Em. Desire him to walk up. *(Exit Servant.)* I am fit to see any company now.——This discovery will do me more good, I believe, than all Mr. Prattle's cordial mixtures, as he calls them.

Bell. Oh, you're in charming spirits, sister—But Captain Johnson! you abound in the military, Captains, Colonels, and Majors, by wholesale: Who is Captain Johnson, pray?

Em. Only the name that Mademoiselle Florival, the Belleisle lady you saw this morning, goes by.

Bell. Oh, sister, the luckiest thought in the world—such an use to make of this lady.

Em. What d'ye mean?

Bell. Captain Johnson shall be Colonel Tamper's rival, sister!

Em. Hush! here she is.

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Enter Mademoiselle FLORIVAL.

Em. Give me leave, Madam, to introduce you to my sister.

Bell. I have heard your story, Madam, and take part in your misfortunes.

Flo. I am infinitely obliged both to you and to that lady, Madam.

Em. Oh! Madam, I have been extremely ill since you was here this morning, and terrified almost beyond imagination.

Flo. I am very sorry to hear it; may I ask what has alarm'd you?

Em. It is so ridiculous, I scarce know how to tell you.

Bell. Then I will. You must know, Ma'am, that my sister was engaged to an officer, who went out on a late military expedition. He is just returned, but is come home with the strangest conceit that ever filled the brain of a lover. He took it into his head to try my sister's faith by pretending to be maimed and wounded, and has actually visited her this morning in a counterfeit character. We have just now detected the imposition, and want your assistance to be pleasantly revenged on him.

Flo. I cannot bring myself to be an advocate for the lady's cruelty—But you may both command me in any thing.

Em. There is no cruelty in the case; I fear I am gone too far for that. As you are, in appearance, such a smart young gentleman, my sister has wag-

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Bell. I vow, Mr. Prattle, you are extremely amusing. You know the chit-chat of the whole town.

Prat. Can't avoid picking up a few slight anecdotes, to be sure, Ma'am—Go into the best houses in town—attend the first families in the kingdom—nobody better received—nobody takes more care—nobody tries to give more satisfaction.

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Prat. I wish I may die, Ma'am, if the Colonel had not yesterday two as good legs and fine eyes as any man in the world. If he lost one of each at the Havannah, we practitioners in physic should be much obliged to him to communicate his receipt for the benefit of Greenwich and Chelsea hospitals.

Em. Are you sure that the Colonel has had no such loss, Sir?

Prat. As sure as that I am here, Ma'am! I saw him going into the what-d'ye-call-him ambassador's, just over against my house, yesterday; and the last place I was at this morning was Mrs. Daylight's, where I heard the Colonel was at her route last night, and that every body thought he was rather improved than injured by his late expedition.—But, odso! Lack-a-day, lack-a-day, lack-a-day!—now I recollect—ha, ha, ha! [*Laughing very heartily.*

Bell. What's the matter, Mr. Prattle?

Prat. Excuse me, ladies: I can't forbear laughing—ha, ha, ha!—The gentleman in t'other room, Colonel Tamper! ha, ha, ha!——I find the Colonel had a mind to pay a visit in masquerade this morning——I spoke to Major Belford——I thought I knew his friend too——but he limped away, and hid his face, and would not speak to me.——Upon my

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Tam. 'Sdeath, I have not power to speak to her.—This strange and sudden alteration in your behaviour, Madam———

Em. Alteration! none at all, Sir: the change is on your side, not mine. I'll be judg'd by this gentleman.—Captain Johnson, here's a miniature of the Colonel, which he sat for just before he went abroad ——done by a good hand, and reckoned a striking likeness.——Did you ever see a poor creature so altered? [*Giving a bracelet.*

Flo. Why, really, Madam, there is, I must own, a very visible difference at present.—That black ribband *(looking by turns on the picture and Colonel Tamper)* makes a total eclipse of the brilliancy of this right eye—and then, the irregular motion of the leg gives such a twist to the rest of the body, that—

Tam. Sir!——But it is to you I address myself at present, Madam.—I was once fond and foolish enough to imagine that you had a heart truly generous and sensible; and flattered myself that it was above being shaken by absence, or affected by events.—How have I been deceived! I find that——

Em. Pardon me, Sir, I never deceived you:—nay, you see that I disdained the thought of deceiving you even for a day.——Out of respect to our late mutual attachment, I am resolved to deal openly with you. In a word, then, every thing between us must now be at an end.

Tam. Confusion!——Every thing at an end! and can you, you, Emily, have the courage to tell me so?

Em. Why not? Come, come, Colonel Tamper, vanity is your blind side.

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ENGRAVED FOR PARSONS's MINOR THEATRE.

Engraved for Parsons, 21 Paternoster Row. June 1794.

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Tam. Zounds, Madam!

Em. Don't be in a passion—— Do but consider the matter calmly; and though it may rather be displeasing, yet when you have duly weighed all circumstances, I'm sure you must do me the justice to acknowlege my sincerity.

Tam. I shall run mad——Is it possible, Emily?——Sincerity do you call this?——Dissimulation—damn'd dissimulation.

Em. Have patience, Sir! The loss of your whole fortune would have been trifling to me; but how can I reconcile myself to this mangling of your figure? —Let me turn the tables on you for a moment—Suppose now, Colonel, that I had been so unfortunate as to have lost a leg and an eye, should you, d'ye think, have retained your affection inviolable for me?

Tam. False, false woman!—Have a care, Emily! have a care, I say, or you'll destroy your fame and happiness for ever.—Consider what you are doing, ere you make a final resolution——You'll repent your inconstancy, I tell you beforehand—upon my soul, you will—You'll have more reason to repent it, than you can possibly imagine.

Em. Why will you oblige me now to say shocking things to you? It goes against me to tell you so, but I can't even see you now without horror; nay, was I even, from a vain point of honour, to adhere to my engagements with you, I could never conquer

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my disgust.—It would be a most unnatural connection.—Wou'd not it, Captain Johnson?

Tam. Hell! 'sdeath! confusion!—How steadily she persists in her perfidy! Madam! Madam!—— I shall choak with rage—But one word, and I am gone for ever—for ever, for ever, Madam!

Em. What would you say, Sir?

Tam. Tell me then——and tell me truly: Have not you received the addresses of that gentleman?

Em. He has honoured me with them, I confess, Sir; and every circumstance is so much in his favour, that I could have no manner of objection to him, but my unfortunate engagements to you—But since your ill fortune has invincibly divorced us from each other, I think I am at liberty to listen to him.

Tam. Matchless confidence!—Mighty well, Madam!—It is not then the misfortunes that have befallen me, but the charms you have found in that gentleman, which have altered your inclination.

Flo. Well, Sir! and what then, Sir? The lady I presume, is not included, like an old mansion-house, in the rent-roll of your estate, or the inventory of your goods and chattels. Her hand, I hope, is still her own property, and she may bestow it on you or me, or any body else, just as she pleases.

Tam. You are a villain, Sir!—Withdraw!

Bell. Oh Heavens! here will be murder—Don't stir, I beg you, Sir.

Flo. O never fear me, Madam; I am not such a poltroon as to contend with that gentleman—Do you

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think I would set my strength and skill against a poor blind man, and a cripple?

Tam. Follow me, Sir; I'll soon teach you to use your own legs.

Flo. Oh the sturdy beggar! stir your stumps and begone; here's nothing for you, fellow!

Tam. Villain!

Flo. Poor man!

Tam. Scoundrel!

Flo. Prithee, man, don't expose yourself.

Tam. Puppy!

Flo. Poor wretch:

Em. What, quarrel before ladies! Oh, for shame Colonel!

Tam. This is beyond all sufferance. I can contain no longer—Know then, Madam, (*to Emily*), to your utter confusion, I am not that mangled thing which you imagine me——You may see, Madam——

[*Resuming his natural manner.*

Em. Bell. Flo. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

[*Laughing violently.*

Em. A wonderful cure of lamness and blindness—Your case is truly curious, Sir;—and attested by three credible witnesses——Will you give us leave to print it in the public papers?

Tam. Madam, Madam!——

Flo. I think the story would make a figure in the Philosophical Transactions.

Tam. Sir!

Bell. A pretty leg, indeed——Will you dance a minuet with me, Colonel?

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Em. Your wounds are not mortal, I hope, Colonel?

Tam. No, Madam! my person I thank Heaven, is still unhurt.—I have my legs, both legs, Madam; and I will use them to transport me as far as possible from so false a woman—I have my eyes, too—my eyes, Madam——but they shall never look on you again, but as the most faithless and ungrateful of your sex.

Em. If I'm not surpriz'd how he could act it so well! Pray, let us see you do it over again, Colonel —How was it eh? (*Mimicking*) hip-hop, hip-hop, like Prince Volscious, I think.

Tam. I took that method, Madam, to try your truth, constancy, and affection. I have found you void of all those qualities, and shall have reason to rejoice at the effect of my experiment as long as I live.

Em. If you meant to seperate yourself from me, you have indeed taken an excellent method. And a mighty proof you have given of your own affection, truly!—Instead of returning, after an anxious absence, with joy into my presence, to come home with a low and mean suspicion, with a narrow jealousy of mind, when the frankness and generosity of my behaviour ought to have engaged you to repose the most unlimited confidence in me.

Tam. The event, Madam, has but well warranted my experiment.

Em. And shall justify it, Sir, still more:—for here, before your face, I give my hand to this gentleman;

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—solemnly declaring, that it shall never be in your power to dissolve the connection formed between us.

Tam. As to you, Madam, your infidelity be your punishment.—But that gentleman shall hear from me.

Flo. I defy you, Sir!

Em. Nothing farther remains between us—leave me, Sir!

Tam. I am gone, Madam! and so help me, Heaven, never, never to return—— [*Going.*

Enter MAJOR BELFORD.

Belf. How! going in a passion?—Hold, Tamper—All in confusion!—I thought so—and came to set matters to rights again

Flo. What do I see! Major Belford!——Major Belford! oh! [*Faints.*

Belf. Ha, my name, and fainting?——What can this mean? *(Runs and takes her in his arms.)* By heavens, a woman!—May I hope that——Hold, she recovers—It is, it is she! my dear Florival herself!—and we shall still be happy.

Tam. Belford's Belleisle lady, as I live!——My rival a woman! I begin to feel myself very ridiculous.

Belf. What wonder, my love, has brought you hither, and in this habit?

Flo. Oh, Sir, I have a long story to relate. At present let it suffice to say, that that lady's brother has been the noblest of friends to me; and she her-

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self this morning generously vouchsafed to take me under her protection.

Belf. I am bound to them for ever. At my return I found letters from your father, who, supposing you was in England with me, wrote to acquaint me that he was inconsolable for your loss, and that he would consent to our union if I would but assure him that you was safe and well.—The next post shall acquaint him of our good fortune.—Well, Tamper, am not I a lucky fellow?

Tam. Oh, Belford!—I am the most miserable dog in the world.

Belf. What, you have dropp'd your mask, I see—you're on your own legs again—I met Prattle in the street—He stopt his chariot to speak to me about you, and I found that he had blown you up, and discovered to the ladies that you was returned quite unhurt from the Havannah.

Tam. Did that coxcomb betray me?—That accounts for all Emily's behaviour—Oh, Major, I am ruined past redemption——I have behaved most extravagantly, both to your lady and Emily.—I shall never be able to look them in the face again.

Belf. Ay, ay, I foresaw this. Did not I tell you that you would expose yourself confoundedly?—However, I'll be an advocate for you——my Florival shall be an advocate for you; and I make no doubt but you will be taken into favour again.

Em. Does he deserve it, Major?

Belf. Why, Madam, I can't say much for him—

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or myself either, faith——We must rely entirely on your goodness.

Flo. He's a true penitent, I see, Madam; and I'll answer for it, he loves you to excess—Nay, look on him.

Em. Was it well done, Colonel, to cherish a mean distrust of me? to trifle with the partiality I had shown to you; and to endeavour to give me pain, merely to secure a poor triumph over my weakness to yourself?

Tam. I am ashamed to answer you.

Bell. Ashamed! and so you well may indeed.

Tam. I see my absurdity—all I wish is to be laughed at, and forgiven.

Belf. A very reasonable request.——Come, Madam, pity the poor fellow, and admit him to your good graces again.

Flo. Let us prevail on you, dear Madam.

Em. Well—now I see he is most heartily mortified, I am half inclined to pity him.

Tam. Generous Emily!

Bell. Go, you provoking wretch! 'tis more than you deserve. [*To Tam.*

Tam. It shall be the future study of my life to deserve this pardon—(*Kissing her hand.*)—Belford, I give you joy——Madam—(*to Florival.*)—I have behaved so ill to you, I scarce know how to give you joy as I ought.

Belf. Come, come, no more of this at present—Now we have on all sides ratified the preliminaries,

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let us settle the definitive treaty as soon as we can—We have been two lucky fellows, Tamper—I have been fortunate in finding my mistress, and you as fortunate in not losing yours.

Tam. So we have, Belford; and I wish every brave officer in his Majesty's service had secured to himself such comfortable winter-quarters as we have, after a glorious campaign.

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